GRAETZ

POPULAR HISTORY OF THE JEWS

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POPULAR
HISTORY OF THE JEWS

BY
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WITH A SUPPLEMENTARY VOLUME OF RECENT EVENTS
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From the First Expulsion of the Jews from France (1306 C. E.) to the Settlement of Don Joseph Nassi in Turkey (1553 C. E.)

ILLUSTRATED

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PERSECUTIONS IN FRANCE AND GERMANY

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST EXPULSION FROM FRANCE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

(1306-1328)

Philip IV, the Fair, king of France, one of those princes who converted royalty into an arrogant, wilful and conscienceless despotism, issued a secret decree unexpectedly (Jan., 1306) to all the higher and lower officials of his kingdom, enjoining upon them the utmost secrecy meanwhile, to seize and incarcerate all the Jews of France on one and the same day without warning. As the Jews were about recuperating from the fast of the Ninth of Ab commemorative of the fall of Jerusalem, and were preparing to enter upon their usual occupations on the next day, policemen and bailiffs appeared, seized them, and dragged them, old and young, men, women and children, to the prisons (July 22) where they were informed that they must leave the country within a month on pain of death, but must leave their property and their claims behind. Philip, who was more shrewd than fanatical, and who had formerly protected the Jews against the clergy, was actuated in his sudden change of attitude to the Jews not by religious intolerance or by a concession to the popular will, but by greed first of all. Philip's quarrel with the pope and his war with the rebellious Flemish countries so drained his treasury and necessitated such merciless extortions that the popular songs gibed: "The chicken in the pot is not safe from the king's grip." Philip therefore decided to replenish his treasury by means of Jewish possessions. There was, however, possibly still another circumstance that led the king to this heartless resolution.

The German emperor Albrecht, who was not on the best of terms with him, demanded that Philip transfer to him the kingdom of Arles, to deliver to him Jesus' crown of thorns alleged to be kept in a French monastery, and to acknowledge the emperor's proprietorship of the French Jews to which he is entitled as the successor of the emperors Vespasian, Titus and Charlemagne; in other words, to share with him the revenues he extorted from the French Jews. Philip is said to have consulted his legal authorities as to the justice of the emperor's claim, and, when they replied in the affirmative, the thought occurred to him to strip the Jews of all their possessions, and to send the imperial bondsmen back to Albrecht naked and barefooted. The French king justified his inhuman as well as unstatesmanlike act by charging the Jews with all sorts of crimes that made their expulsion imperative. That his real purpose was to possess himself of the property of the Jews he proved by merciless plundering of his victims. The officials left the wretched Jews nothing but the garments they had on their backs; and no one, no matter how rich he may have been formerly, was allowed to take more than one day's rations. Entire wagon-loads of Jewish property, gold, silver, gems, were sent to the king; their less valuable possessions were sold for a song and the money was delivered to the royal treasury.

And thus at the expiration of the thirty days of grace (Sept., 1306) about one hundred thousand souls were driven from the land where their forefathers had dwelled, in part, even in the days of the Roman republic, long before the Franks and Christianity made their appearance in France. Some Jews, loath to forfeit their possessions and to leave the country they loved, embraced Christianity. The famous institutions of learning, the seats of so much intellectual activity, the schools of Rashi and the Tosafists in Troyes, Paris, Sens, Chinon, Orleans, and the homes of higher culture such as Beziers, Lunel, Montpellier, the seat of the conflict between science and the Talmud, all these institutions as well as the synagogs were sold to the highest bidders or given away. A German or an English king would possibly have destroyed the sanctuaries of the Jews; King Philip the Fair made a present of a Paris synagog to his coachman. An approximate conception of the vast sum of money the king derived from the robbery and expulsion of the Jews may be formed from the fact that the sale of Jewish property in the prefecture of Orleans alone brought 337,000 francs.

How many of the exiles must have succumbed on the way to the hardships of their wanderings and tribulations! The plaintive cries of the victims of the expulsion still ring doleful and pathetic to-day. Estori Parhi, at that time a youth of much erudition and of a tender heart, a relative of Jacob Tibbon, whose parents had moved from Spain to Southern France, describes his sorrow: "They tore me away from the academy; a mere youth, I had to leave my father's house naked, and wander from land to land,—from people to people whose language was strange to me." Parhi found refuge in Palestine at last.

The cruel expulsion of the Jews from France demanded its martyrs too. Those who remained in the countries after the allotted time and refused to submit to baptism forfeited their lives. The banished Jews scattered in all directions; some, like Estori Parhi, wandered as far as Palestine; the majority, however, kept as closely as possible to the French border, and took up their abode in Provence that was then in part under German suzerainty and in the province of Rousillon that then belonged to the Aragonian king of Mallorca. They wished to await a favorable turn of affairs that might enable them to return to their former homes. As a matter of fact, they were not wrong in their speculation. King Philip himself was necessitated by his greed to recede from his former position.

Strange to say, the passionate quarrel that broke out in Montpellier over the question whether the youth be permitted to engage in the study of science did not subside with the expulsion from France but transplanted to a different scene. The sufferings incident to the recent misfortune did not diminish the mutual hatred of the two parties. A portion of the Tibbonide party settled in Perpignan, a possession of the king of Mallorca, who tolerated the Jews because of the benefit he expected to derive from their commercial skill and energy, though he was by no means a friend of the Jews and it was upon his order that copies of the Talmud were again consigned to the flames. Abba Mari and another portion of the Montpellier community located at first at Arles, but as they were not permitted to stay there they settled in Perpignan likewise (Jan., 1307). Their opponents, however, who had some influence with the king or the governor, endeavored to prevent their settling in that city. The conflict broke out afresh. Solomon ibn Adret and Asheri again took sides in the quarrel. Asheri who, because of his uncompromising attitude to the question at issue, now became the leader of the anti-scientific party, declared that he had signed the decree of excommunication only half-heartedly because, in his opinion, the clause that permitted the pursuit of profane studies after the twenty-fifth year was too tolerant. Scientific pursuits must be interdicted for life because they inevitably lead to unbelief. The defenders of science are to be condemned all the more unsparingly since the tribulations of exile made no impression upon them, did not break their obstinancy, and left them incorrigible.

This view that science in general was pernicious to Judaism gained an ever wider acceptance after the death of Ibn Adret (1310) when Asheri was acknowledged the sole authority in religious affairs in Spain and the neighboring countries. He, his sons and his associates who had emigrated with him from Germany transplanted from the Rhine region to buoyant Toledo that spirit of sincere but punctilious, narrow, intolerant piety; that gloomy state of mind that regards innocent joy as a sin; that depression that characterized the German Jews in the Middle Ages, and inoculated all Spanish Jewry with it. All intellectual advancement in the field of profane knowledge was checked. Asheri concentrated all the powers of his intellect upon the Talmud and its interpretation. His chief work was an abridgement of the Talmud for practical religious purposes (1307-14), in which he cultivated the tendency of adopting the most onerous, punctilious and rigid legal views. Any scholar who wished to gain a hearing for any subject outside of the Talmud had to dress it in the garb of humble piety. When the erudite Isaac ben Joseph Israeli II wished to publish his astronomical work Yessod Olam (1310), he had to give it an orthodox, Talmudic dress and preface it by a confession of faith before Asheri would give his approval to it.

At this time, during Asheri's rabbinate in Toledo, several eminent Jews gained an influence at court once more. King Ferdinand IV (1295-1312), had a Jewish treasurer named Samuel whose advice he followed in political affairs also. The queen-mother, Maria de Molina, however, hated the favorite Samuel with feminine passionateness, because he was said to have fed the animosity between mother and son. One day, when Samuel was in Badajoz and was making ready to follow the king to Seville, he was attacked by an assassin, hired by no one knows whom, and seriously wounded. Only the utmost care and attention given him by the king enabled him to recover. The queen-mother herself, upon the death of her son, entrusted the revenues of the state to a Jewish treasurer, Don Moses (1312-19).

The regent, Infante Don Juan Emanuel, great nephew of the young king Alphonso XI (1319-25) was a patron of science, himself a writer and poet, and had therefore some respect for educated Jews. Judah ben Isaac ibn Wakar, of Cordova, stood high in his favor, presumably as his treasurer, and through Ibn Wakar's influence, Don Emanuel restored to the rabbis the right to exercise criminal jurisdiction which they had lost during the regency of Maria de Molina, and practiced only in secret. But Judah ibn Wakar was a great admirer of Asheri's, and, like him, believed that every religious transgression should be punished most severely. When a man in Cordova uttered a sort of blasphemy in Arabic, in a moment of ill-humor, Ibn Wakar inquired of Asheri what punishment should be meted out to him, and the latter decreed that the offender's tongue be cut out. When a pretty Jewess was charged with illicit relations with a Christian, and Don Juan Emanuel committed her case to the Jewish court, Judah ibn Wakar ordered the disfigurement of her face by cutting off her nose, and Asheri approved this verdict.

The communities of Southern Spain or Castile were still enjoying peace and security, but those of Northern Spain and Southern France were exposed to bloody attacks on the part of fanatical hordes which the Church at first unleashed and then could no longer hold in check. Jews had settled in France again. Louis X had recalled them nine years after the expulsion (1315). This king who was moved by a whim to revoke his father's decrees, and to place his advisers on trial, was urged by the nobility and by the people to whom the Jews were indispensable to readmit the latter into France, and he opened negotiations with them with that end in view. Knowing the fickleness of the French kings, the Jews hesitated at first, and then stipulated that they might be permitted to settle again in the places where they had formerly lived, that they might not be charged with former offences, that their sacred books, synagogs and cemeteries be restored to them, or new sites given them for the erection of synagogs; that they be given the right to collect their former claims, two-thirds of which shall accrue to the king; that their former privileges, in so far as they were still in existence, be restored to them, or new ones be given them instead. King Louis accepted all these conditions, and granted them, in addition, the right of locating in any part of the country, under certain restrictions. In order, however, not to provoke the clergy, Louis, on his part, stipulated that the Jews wear a distinctive badge of a certain color.

Two high officials were appointed to adjust the affairs of the returned exiles. For the time being, their residence in France was fixed for a period of twelve years. Should the king desire to banish them again at the expiration of that period, he pledged himself to announce his intention a year in advance in order to give them time to make the necessary preparations. The king, thereupon, published the edict of recall, in which he stated that his father had been misled into banishing the Jews by false advisers, but that since the consensus of the people demanded their recall, the Church was ready to tolerate them, and St. Louis, his ancestor, had established the precedent of first banishing and then recalling them, the return of the Jews was hereby granted. As a result, the French Jews flocked in great numbers to their former homes; they regarded this episode as a wonderful redemption. Upon the death of Louis X a year later his brother Philip V, the Long, who ascended the throne, extended their privileges, took special pains to protect them against the interference of the clergy, and decreed that the seizure of Jews and their books be reserved to royal officials alone. This decree, however, did not put a stop to annoyances on the part of the clergy. In Toulouse, they confiscated two wagon-loads of Talmudic copies, and burned them in the streets. But these vexations were mere childish pranks compared with what they had to endure at the hands of the fanatical populace.

Philip V was seized by the notion to undertake a new crusade in order to wrest the Holy Land from the hands of the infidels. This enterprise appeared so impractical to all clear-headed men, that even the pope John XXII, the second pope to reside in Avignon instead of Rome, dissuaded him from it. The common people, however, received this idea with great enthusiasm. A young shepherd, endowed with a vivid imagination, told that a white dove had alighted on his head and then on his shoulder, and when he was about to seize it it was transformed into a beautiful woman who urged him to gather about him a band of crusaders, and promised him victory. His statements found ready credence. A wicked priest and an unfrocked Benedictine monk took advantage of this opportunity to gain prestige, and thus there was formed in Northern France (1320) a large horde of forty thousand shepherds who marched with flags in procession from town to town, and announced their intention of crossing the sea to wrest the Holy Sepulchre from the hands of the infidels.

Whether prompted by a desire to supply themselves with weapons at the expense of the Jews, or by revenge because, so it was said, a Jew had ridiculed their foolhardy enterprise, the mobs soon turned their attention to the Jews, and added another bloody page to the Jewish annals. The bands of shepherds that assembled at the city of Agen (on the Garonne) massacred all the Jews they found in the course of their march from that city to Toulouse upon the refusal of the former to accept baptism. About five hundred Jews found refuge in the fortress of Verdun (on the Garonne). The shepherds made a violent attack upon it, and a desperate struggle ensued. When the Jews realized the hopelessness of their situation, they determined upon self-destruction. They selected the oldest and most prominent man among them, who, in turn, chose a strong youth to assist him, and the two proceeded to release their comrades from their wretched existence. When the old man fell at last by the hand of his younger comrade, the sole survivor, the love of life reasserted itself, and the latter offered to surrender and to accept baptism. The shepherds, however, were either just enough or inhuman enough to reject his offer, and tore the deserter in pieces. The Jewish children they found in the tower were baptized by force.

The governor of Toulouse exerted himself to the utmost to protect the Jews of his city, ordered the knights to seize the approaching shepherds, and sent many of them in chains to the capital. But riotous mobs of their sympathizers succeeded in releasing the prisoners and the greater number of the Jews of Toulouse were massacred on that occasion. Thus perished nearly all the Jews of Bordeaux, Gascony, Toulouse, Albi and other cities of Southern France. On the whole, more than a hundred and twenty Jewish communities of France and Northern Spain were completely destroyed by the persecutions of the shepherds, and the balance were reduced to such povery that they had to depend upon the assistance of their coreligionists outside of France. This assistance, however, even that of Germany, was ample and generous.

The following year the Jews were visited by new misfortunes and the Jews of France were again the first victims. This persecution was occasioned by lepers. In the Middle Ages these wretches were driven from society, outlawed, confined in an unhealthy quarter of the city, and provided by the authorities with the necessaries of life. On one occasion, the lepers in the district of Guienne, angry because they were not given enough food, threw poison in wells and streams, and many people perished as a result. When this matter became public knowledge, and the lepers were subjected to rigid investigation under torture, one of them, prompted by his own malice, or at the suggestion of another, cast the entire guilt on the shoulders of the Jews, and claimed that they had suggested the plan of poisoning the wells. Incredible as this charge sounded, it found general credence, and even King Philip V did not doubt it in the least. One report was soon circulated that the Jews wanted to avenge themselves for the sufferings they sustained at the hands of the shepherds a year before; another report had it that they were induced by the Mohammedan king of Granada to poison the Christians, and still another that they had come to an understanding with the Mohammedan rulers of Palestine for the purpose of defeating Philip's proposed crusade. On the ground of this charge, many Jews in different places were imprisoned, unmercifully tortured and some of them were burned (July, 1321). In Chinon a deep pit was dug in which a fire was kindled and one hundred and sixty Jewish men and women were cast into the flames. The martyrs awaited death singing sacred songs. Mothers are said to have thrown their children into the flames first to prevent them from being baptized by force. Altogether five thousand are said to have perished in the flames. Philip, it is true, discovered later on that the charge was false, but inasmuch as the Jews were once accused he determined to utilize the opportunity for the benefit of his treasury. Parliament imposed upon the communities a fine of 150,000 pounds (Parisian), the communities to apportion the fine among themselves. As a result, deputies from Northern France and Languedoc came together and arranged that the communities of Southern France that became impoverished the preceding year in the course of the massacres contribute 47,000 pounds, and that the communities of Northern France pay the balance. The wealthiest Jews were placed under arrest as surety for the payment of the fine, and their property as well as their claims were placed under attachment.

In the same year the most ancient community of Europe was threatened by a grave danger that came to all the more unexpectedly since that community had hitherto tasted but little of the bitter cup the Jews of France, England and even Spain drained so often. The circumstance that Rome belonged to the pope least of all, but rather to the families of Colonna and Orsini that waged their party feuds within its gates made it possible for the Jews to escape the canonical annoyances. They were fortunate in receiving scant notice, and were, therefore, in a position to develop their material and intellectual conditions. There were those among them who possessed palatial residences provided with all the comforts of life. They were lovers of science and poetry. The seed scattered by Ibn Ezra, Hillel of Verona, Zerahiah ben Shealtiel and others began to bear fruit. When the bloom of culture faded in Southern France as a result of the rigidly Talmudic tendency on the one hand and of the bloody persecutions on the other, it began to flourish in Italy and particularly in Rome.

Italy was just then in the age of Dante, witnessing the dawn of a new civilization that was to dispel the medieval darkness of the papacy and of brute force, of the Church and of knighthood—the two pillars of Medievalism. Patriotism, a yearning for liberty, and a whimsical love for art and science were the striking expressions of a new spirit, of a longing for rejuvenescence, which only the emperor, the personification of brutal knighthood, and the pope, the embodiment of the rigid Church, failed to perceive. This new spirit redounded to the advantage of the Jews. Robert of Anjou, one of the mightiest Italian princes, king of Naples, count of Provence (Arelat), vicar-general of the pontifical states, and vice-regent for a long time of the German-Roman empire, was an ardent admirer of Jewish literature and, as a result, also a protector of the Jews. Leone Romano was the teacher of King Robert of Naples whom he instructed in the original language of the Bible. Leone Romano understood the Latin, the learned language of Christendom, and was the first Jew to direct his attention to the scholastic philosophy of the Dominicans. He translated for Jewish readers the philosophic writings of Albertus the Great and of Thomas Aquinas. At the instance of King Robert, a fantastic and prolific writer, Shemariah Ikriti (of Crete) wrote a biblical commentary and dedicated it to the king with the words: "To the exalted king Robert, adorned like Solomon with the crown of wisdom and the diadem of kingship, I send the exposition of the Story of Creation and of the Song of Songs." While King Robert was sojourning in Southern France, he made the acquaintance of the erudite and genial satirist, Kalonymos, and took him into his service. Prompted either by a spirit of imitation or by a sincere love for Jewish literature, wealthy Jews likewise surrounded themselves with Jewish writers, relieved them from every day cares by generous help and stimulated their activities by their encouragement.

In this relatively favored period enjoyed by the Jews of Italy and of Rome there appeared two Jewish satirists who possessed the art to reproduce, in a tone of apparent frivolity, an almost photographically faithful picture of their time. One of these was Kalonymos who was in the service of King Robert, and, though a Provençal, sojourned in Rome for some time; the other was a native of Rome, and had the good fortune of being admitted into the circle of Dante's friends. Kalonymos b. Kalonymos (1284—before 1337), was a man of sound erudition, familiar with the Arabic language and literature, all the more remarkable in a Provençal, and, when still a young man (1307-

13) translated medical, astronomical and philosophical works from the Arabic into the Hebrew. Kalonymos, however, was not alone a translator, but also an independent thinker. Laying metaphysical speculations aside, he devoted himself to ethics which he wished to inculcate upon his coreligionists "because its neglect leads men to all sorts of perversities and to mutual injury." But he presents his ethical ideas not in the dry, categoric manner of the moralists, but in an attractive garb. In his work "The Touchstone" (Eben Bohan, 1322), he holds up a mirror to his Jewish contemporaries in which they could recognize their shortcomings, follies and sins. To avoid the appearance of a censor, he gives a register of his own sins which, however, is satire rather than confession. At times he satirizes even Judaism itself! He wished he were a girl which would have relieved him of the six hundred and thirteen commandments and of the many additional Talmudic "fences" and statutes which the most conscientious could not fulfill. As a woman there would have been no necessity to torment himself with so much learning, with the Bible, the Talmud and cognate studies, or to torture himself with logic, mathematics, physics, astronomy and philosophy. On occasion, however, his satire turns into bitter seriousness. The bloody massacres brought about by the shepherds and the lepers frightened away his humorous mood and his satire was in the end transformed into a dirge. While at Rome whither he was sent by King Robert on an important diplomatic mission, Kalonymos made the acquaintance of a merry, joyous and creative literary circle that stimulated him to write a parody. He composed a tractate for Purim, the Jewish carnival, wherein he copied the Talmudic train of thought, its methods, its controversies, and its digressions. This

fine parody, written either as a mere harmless carnival jest or as a satire upon the Talmud, moves the reader to constant laughter by its humor and witticisms.

Still more gifted and endowed with a richer poetic imagination was his older friend and admirer, Immanuel b. Solomon Romi (about 1265-1330). Immanuel was almost an abnormal phenomenon in the Middle Ages. He belonged to the class of writers whose writings, it is true, are not very chaste, but all the more attractive for this very reason. He fascinates his readers and excites their mirth by his bubbling wit, insolent humor and biting satire. He may be called the Heine of the Middle Ages. Immanuel had always an inexhaustible fund for ingenious drolleries ready at hand, and all this in the holy tongue of the prophets and the psalmists! None of his predecessors possessed like him the art of discharging entire volleys of scintillating wit. But if, on the one hand, he rejuvenated the Hebrew language, and used it as a medium for ingenious entertainment, he robbed it, on the other hand, of its sacred character. Immanuel transformed the modest, deeply veiled virgin of the Hebrew muse into a slightly clad female dancer who ogles the passersby. The most indecent things he calls by name without the slightest delicacy, and his collections of songs and tales can have a very deleterious effect upon hot-blooded youth. This, however, does not mean that he actually was the hardened sinner that he, like Heine, describes himself, who thought of nothing else than the indulgence in amorous affairs. He sinned only with his tongue and pen but hardly with his heart and mind. Though he indulges in exaggerated self-praise, one may believe the simple description of his moral conduct when he says that "he bore his enemies no malice, was loyal to his friends, cherished gratitude to his benefactors, possessed a sympathetic soul, was not niggardly with his knowledge, and occupied himself with science and poetry while his associates were indulging in the joys of life."

As a matter of fact, his life, his position and his vocation seem to be the very reverse of the ideas one forms of this satirist from the reading of his works. In the Roman community he occupied a prominent position, held an office of some sort; was, at any rate, a respectable person. He seems to have practised medicine, though he often makes merry at the nostrums of quacks. In a word, he led a sedate domestic life permeated by morality and religion that admitted of no excesses of any kind. His respectable station in life did not, however, prevent him from singing indecent songs, and to pose in his poetic writings as a man who was a stranger to religion, respectability and learning.

Immanuel was acquainted with, if not a friend of Dante, the greatest poet of the Middle Ages. Though differing widely in the manner of their poetic expressions, Dante's ethereal, serious, noble, Immanuel's compact, merry, frivolous, they had several points of contact. Both absorbed all the cultural elements of the past. Dante the ecclesiastic, scholastic and romantic; Immanuel the biblical-Talmudic, Maimonistic-philosophic and Neo-Hebraic; and both reduced this varied material to an organized whole, and evolved out of it a new style of poetry. The Italians were then filled with a poetic impulse, and this same impulse awakened Immanuel's muse. Immanuel could sing in Italian too; this is indicated by a graceful Italian poem of his that is extant; and he introduced the Italian stanza into neo-Hebraic poetry. He wrote a multitude of short tales, dialogs, epistles, eulogies and elegies, that compel laughter by their turns of phrase and comic situations. In one of these tales he introduces a disputatious Hebrew grammarian who was seeking grammatical combats and who had a strikingly handsome wife. Immanuel enters into a long wordy dispute with him in order to be in a position to ogle his wife. He is defeated in grammar but is victorious in love.

Full of fine satire is his description of Hell and Paradise in which he imitates Dante. But while the Christian-romantic poet displays seriousness and sublimity in his poetic creation, holds a last judgment, as it were, and has sinners and criminals, political opponents and enemies of Italy, cardinals and popes tortured in hell, Immanuel utilizes the scenes of heaven and hell solely for the purpose of giving expression to his humorous fancies. Dante wrote a "Divine Comedy," Immanuel a "Human Comedy." He introduces his journey through heaven and hell by narrating that he once felt grievously oppressed by the burden of his sins, and the misery of contrition came upon him, when his young friend Daniel, of whom cruel death had robbed him, appeared before him and offered to guide him through the torture chambers of hell and the blessed field of heaven. In the chambers of hell Immanuel saw not only the wicked and godless characters of the bible, but also Aristotle "because he taught the eternity of the universe," and Plato because he maintained "the reality of generic ideas." Most of all, however, Immanuel flagellates his contemporaries in this poem. He metes out the tortures of hell to the enemies of science, to a Talmudist who indulged in the coarsest excesses in secret, to plagiarists, and to men who seek to monopolize all honors in the synagog, such as occupying a seat next to the holy ark or acting as public reader on the Day of Atonement. Medical quacks he likewise places in hell because they take advantage of the stupidity and the credulity of the masses, and send their confiding patients to a premature death.

His guide leads him also to the gates of paradise. The blessed spirits receive the poet with shouts of joy and exclaim: "Now it is time to laugh, seeing that Immanuel has come!" In the description of paradise and its inhabitants Immanuel's muse assumes a very serious air, but giggles surreptitiously all the more mischievously. He naturally found therein the holy men, the patriarchs, the pious kings and heroes of Jewish antiquity, the prophets and great teachers, the poets Judah Halevi and Harizi, the Jewish philosopher Maimonides. But alongside of King David who strikes the lyre and sings psalms he beholds the harlot Rahab who had harbored the spies in Jericho and Tamar who sat at the parting of the roads. . . . Dante's poem excludes from paradise the entire pagan world because they did not know Christ and did not become participants in the grace of salvation. Immanuel sees a band of the blessed whom he did not recognize, and he inquires of his guide who they were. His reply is: "These are the pious and the virtuous pagans who by their intellect had climbed the height of wisdom, who acknowledged the only God as the creator of the universe." As soon as David, Solomon, Isaiah and Ezekiel descry Immanuel they rush forward to meet him, and thank him for having written the best exposition of their respective sacred books. Immanuel takes this occasion to lash unmercifully the older and contemporary biblical commentators whose works did not appeal to him.

The Roman community was rudely awakened out of its comparatively tranquil existence and its peaceful literary occupations, and was reminded that it, too, in the capital of Christendom, was under the dominion of the cross and subject to the rod of chastisement. Sangisa, a sister of Pope John XXII who resided in Avignon, is said to have urged upon her brother to expel the accursed race of Jews from the holy city of Rome and to have instigated several priests to testify that the Jews had made sport of a crucifix borne in a procession. The pope yielded to his sister's insistence, and issued an edict to expel all Jews from the Roman domain. The anti-emperor, Frederick of Austria, who, unlike his rival, Louis the Bavarian, was an enemy of the Jews, and other princes urged upon the pope to proceed with violence against the Jews. The danger was so great that the Roman community, and possibly other communities too, proclaimed a special fast in the hope of averting the danger thereby. But the community did not neglect worldly means either. They sent a clever envoy to the papal court at Avignon and to King Robert of Naples, the patron of Jewish literature. Through the intervention of the latter who was then protector of Rome, the Jewish deputy, presumably the poet Kalonymos, succeeded in proving the innocence of the Jews of the offence with which they were charged, and in appeasing the wrath of the pope and of his sister by means of twenty thousand ducats. The Jews of Rome entered upon their period of tribulation later than their brethren of other European countries.

Although the Italian Jews had developed a fondness for poetry and science, and their condition was a tolerable one, the leadership of Jewry in general still remained in Jewish Spain where science was still appreciated in spite of the fact that Asheri and his sons had made that country the home of extreme piety and obscurantism. In

Castile, under the powerful and prudent Alfonso XI, the Jews enjoyed such a favorable position that this period, in comparison with other European countries, may be called a golden age. Several gifted Jews in succession exerted an influence upon the course of political events under the modest title of treasurers (almoxarifs). The nobility surrounded itself with Jewish advisers and officials. Instead of the humble, servile attitude and the badge of disgrace which the Church prescribed, the wealthy Jews of Castile bore themselves proudly, and were clad in gold and silks. Dazzled by the splendor of this favorable position, some Jews saw in it the fulfillment of the ancient prophecy which Christianity so often emphasized in its attacks upon Judaism: "The sceptre shall not depart from Jacob." (Gen. 49: 10.)

No wonder that the Spanish Jews attached such importance to the fact that some of their coreligionists occupied official positions in the government. Such eminent men were, for the most part, a protecting shield for the communities against the greed of the nobility and gentry, the stupidity and envy of the populace, and the poisonous tongue of the priesthood. The presence of Jewish statesmen in the service and in the entourage of the king, dressed in the fashion of the court and girded with the sword of knighthood, sufficed to disarm the bitter enemies of their coreligionists even without any special intervention on their part. The poorer nobles who possessed nothing but their sword, filled with jealousy against the wealthy and clever Jews, had to hold their peace. The masses, overawed by appearances, dared not, as they did in Germany, maltreat or kill any and every Jew as a pariah, because they knew that the Jews had friends at court. They often overestimated the influence of the Jews, and believed that the latter had the ear of the king at all times. Even the haughty priesthood had to proceed cautiously so long as Joseph of Ecija, Samuel ibn Wakar and others were in a position to counteract its influence.

The Jews of Castile could not but regard themselves extremely fortunate when they compared their own condition with that of their coreligionists of the neighboring countries. In their immediate neighborhood, in Aragon, then united in one kingdom with Mallorca and Sicily, the spirit of intolerance introduced by Raymond de Peñaforte and crystallized into oppressive laws by James I held sway. In Navarre, for half a century, a possession of the French crown, Jew-hatred raged with a fury hitherto known only in Germany. The last Capetian, Charles IV, had died, and with Philip VI the collateral branch of Valois ascended the throne of France. It is remarkable that even Christians believed at that time that Philip the Fair had incurred the extinction of his house because he had so mercilessly expelled the Jews from France. The people of Navarre made exertions to free themselves from France and to establish an independent state. In how far the Jews opposed their efforts can no longer be ascertained. Suffice it that all of a sudden a blood-thirsty exasperation manifested itself throughout the country against the Jews, fed by envy of their wealth and incited by the religious zeal of several monks, particularly the Franciscan Pedro Oligoyen. In the large community of Estella a horrible massacre began on a Sabbath (March 5, 1328). The Jewish quarter was stormed, and in spite of their resistance, nearly all the Jews were slain. The description of an eyewitness gives but a faint notion of the horrors of the massacres of Estella. Menahem ben Zerah, afterwards an eminent scholar, then hardly twenty years of age, lost his parents and four younger brothers in the massacre. He himself was wounded by the cannibals and felled to the ground. Faint and nigh unto death he lay among the corpses of the slain from sunset till midnight when he was sought out by a sympathetic knight, a friend of his father's, who took him to his house and nursed him back to health. Similar atrocities were committed in other parts of the country too. Upward of six thousand Jews perished in these outrages. Only the Jews of the capital, Pampeluna, seem to have been spared.

As a matter of fact, even in Castile, the security of the Jews was more apparent than real. As soon as Alfonso XI reached his majority, and took the reins of power in his own hands (1325-80), he selected two Jewish favorites as his advisers: Don Joseph (ben Ephraim Benveniste Halevi) of Ecija and Samuel ibn Wakar. The former was a man of pleasing exterior, knew music and understood the art of gaining popularity among the nobles. At the recommendation of the king's uncle, Alfonso appointed him not only his treasurer, but also his confidential adviser (privado). Joseph de Ecija had a state coach, was accompanied by knights on his drives, and hidalgos ate at his table. Once, while on an honorable mission for the king, the people of Valladolid besieged him in the palace of the Infanta and violently demanded that he be surrendered to them. Joseph's life was in imminent danger. But a few members of Joseph's retinue succeeded in escaping from the city, and immediately informed the king of the incident. Alfonso, who justly regarded this attack upon his envoy as an insult to his majesty, at once hastened to Valladolid with his knights, besieged the former capital of his kingdom, set fire to several houses and would have destroyed the entire city had he not been dissuaded by influential burghers of Valladolid who explained to him that the ill-will of the people was directed not so much against Don Joseph as against a Christian favorite Don Alvar Nuñez, who was extremely unpopular. Alfonso thereupon removed Alvar from his offices, while Don Joseph remained in favor.

The other favorite was Don Samuel ibn Wakar who was Alfonso's physician, astronomer and possibly also his astrologer. Though not employed in affairs of state, he enjoyed a considerable influence through the favor of the king. Between Don Joseph de Ecija and Ibn Wakar there prevailed the jealousy common among courtiers who bask in the same sun.

Several wealthy Jews, probably relying upon the protection of their friends at court, engaged in dishonorable financial transactions, extorted a high rate of interest and mercilessly persecuted their Christian debtors who were slow in their payments. The king himself encouraged usury on the part of the Jews and Mohammedans because he obtained his share of this extortion. The people, however, complained increasingly of the Jewish and Mohammedan usurers. The cortes of Madrid, Valladolid and other cities petitioned the king and demanded the abolition of these abuses. The king acceded to this request. But the cortes went still farther in their demands, and insisted that Jews be no longer permitted to acquire landed property, and that, on the whole, Jewish treasurers and tax-farmers be no longer tolerated (1329). These demands Alfonso denied. Don Samuel ibn Wakar received still greater favors at the king's hands. Alfonso farmed out to him the imposts upon articles imported from the kingdom of Granada, and, in addition, conferred upon him the privilege of reducing the standard of the coinage. Filled with envy, Joseph de Ecija offered the king a larger sum of money for the lease of the imposts on articles imported from Granada. Ibn Wakar retaliated by persuading the king that it would be advantageous to Castile to carry out a policy of rigid protection and to forbid all imports from the neighboring Moorish kingdom (1330-31).

While the two Jewish courtiers were engaged in outbidding and undermining each other, the enemies of the Jews were laboring assiduously not only to destroy the influence of these two favorites, but to imperil the existence of all Castilian communities. They excited the wrath of the people by the specious assertion that the debasement of the coinage on the part of Ibn Wakar would increase the cost of the necessaries of life inasmuch as merchants would prefer to export provisions to the neighboring countries in exchange for silver that would have a higher value in the home market. The clergy, on their side, were similarly engaged in efforts to arouse anti-Jewish prejudices in the king. Their champion was a Jewish apostate who, hardly converted to Christianity, had become a fanatic Jew-baiter. This man was the notorious Abner who, in a measure, paved the way for the humiliation and the expulsion of the Spanish Jews.

Abner of Burgos, or as he was called later, Alfonso Burgensis de Valladolid, received a biblical and Talmudic as well as a secular education, and practised medicine. Philosophic pursuits undermined his faith, and made him indifferent not only to Judaism, but to religion in general. Worried by the cares of subsistence, and not sufficiently philosophic to content himself with his modest lot, he decided, in his sixtieth year, to embrace Christianity that would provide him with comforts and luxuries, although that religion appealed to his conscience as little as his former religion did. The infidel disciple of Aristotle and Averroes was appointed the sacristan of a large church of Valladolid with a rich prebend that sufficed to satisfy his worldly desires. He endeavored to extenuate his apostasy by sophistries, and soon after his conversion he appeared as a violent enemy of his former coreligionists. Familiar with Jewish literature, it was easy for him to expose its weak points and to draw therefrom the most odious conclusions. Alfonso was indefatigable in heaping charges upon the Jews, and wrote a long series of works in some of which he attacked Judaism and in others of which he defended Christianity against Jewish polemics. More skilled in the Hebrew than in the Spanish, he employed the former language for the defamation of Judaism. When Alfonso had the impudence to send one of his malicious writings to a former acquaintance, Isaac Pulgar, a very able writer and polemic, the latter rebuked him sharply in a sarcastic poem, and attacked him generally in a refutation. The Jews of Spain were not yet sufficiently humbled to keep silent at such impudent attacks. Another little-known writer also replied to Alfonso, and there ensued an impetuous controversy concerning Judaism and Christianity. However, Alfonso of Valladolid appeared directly before King Alfonso XI as an accuser of the Jews. He maintained, or rather revived the assertion of St. Jerome and others, that the Jews had introduced in their prayers an execratory upon the God of the Christians and his worshippers. The representatives of the Valladolid community who were probably requested by the king to vindicate themselves, denied that the execratory, originally aimed at the Mineans, referred to Jesus and his present followers. Alfonso, however, refused to accept this vindication, and offered to prove the correctness of his charge in a disputation with the Jews. The king of Castile, therefore, called upon the representatives of the Valladolid community to enter into a religious discussion with the sacristan. The disputation took place in the presence of state officials and Dominicans. Alfonso Burgensis repeated his charges on this occasion, and carried the day to the extent that King Alfonso issued an edict (Feb. 25, 1336) forbidding the Castilian communities to recite the prayer or execratory in question on pain of a fine. The enemies of the Jews thus succeeded in winning over to their side the king, who had hitherto been friendly to the Jews. And worse was yet to follow.

King Alfonso was not constant in his favors, but transferred them from one to another. Once he bestowed his confidence upon Gonzalo Martinez de Oviedo, who was formerly a poor knight and who owed his advancement to the influence of the Jewish favorite, Don Joseph de Ecija. Instead of cherishing gratitude for his benefactor, he hated the man to whom he owed his advancement, and all the Jews with him. When he became the royal chamberlain and later grand master of the Order of Alcantara (1337), he came out into the open with his designs upon the Jews, and preferred formal charges against Don Joseph and Don Samuel ibn Wakar that they had enriched themselves at the expense of the king. The king, in consequence, authorized him to proceed against them at will in order to extort their treasure from them. Upon Gonzalo's orders these two, two of Ibn Wakar's brothers, and eight relatives, together with their families, were cast into prison and their possessions confiscated. Don Joseph de Ecija died in prison, and Don Samuel succumbed to the torture inflicted upon him. Not content with this, Gonzalo Martinez involved two other Jewish courtiers, Moses Abudiel and (Sulaiman?) Ibn Jaish, in another charge. These men, however, succeeded in proving their innocence, and the charges against them were dismissed. But in a short while Gonzalo came near carrying into execution his evil designs against all the Jews of Castile.

On the occasion of a war with Granada, in which he was appointed commander-in-chief, Gonzalo suggested to the king that he follow the example of Philip of France in expelling all the Jews from the country and in confiscating their property, thereby obtaining the ample means for the prosecution of the war. Fortunately, this proposal met with opposition in the king's council, even on the part of the Castilian prelates. The archbishop of Toledo maintained, on the other hand, that the Jews were an inexhaustible treasure to the king whom it would be folly to plunder, and that the rulers of Castile had ever been the protectors of the Jews. Don Moses Abudiel, who had been informed of the conference, caused the community to proclaim a public fast and to supplicate the God of their fathers to frustrate Gonzalo's evil designs. Gonzalo meanwhile proceeded to the border against the Moorish army, and won easy victories, in which the Moorish commander was slain and his army annihilated. Inflated with his successes, Gonzalo believed that he had gained such weight in Castilian affairs that the king would be forced to sanction the expulsion of the Jews suggested by him. But this arrogance of his was the pride that goeth before a fall.

The feeble hand of a woman brought about his undoing. The beautiful and clever Leonora de Guzman, who had captivated the king with her charms, hated the favorite, Gonzalo Martinez, and succeeded in inspiring the king with distrust in his loyalty. To convince himself on this point, Alfonso ordered Gonzalo to present himself before him in

Madrid. Gonzalo refused obedience, incited the knights of the Order of Alcantara and the citizens of cities entrusted to his care to rise against the king, and opened treasonable negotiations with the king of Portugal and even with the enemy of the Christians, the king of Granada. Alfonso was compelled to summon his knights and to besiege him. In his blindness Gonzalo ordered arrows and other missiles hurled against the king, with the result that one man in the proximity of the king was fatally hurt. But several members of the Alcantara Order deserted their grand-master, and delivered the tower over to the king. Gonzalo had to surrender, and was condemned to death as a traitor and burned (1339). Such was the end of the man who had conspired to bring destruction upon the Jews. The Castilian communities thereupon celebrated a new feast of redemption in the same month that commemorated also the fall of Haman. Afterward Alfonso restored the Jews to favor, and raised Moses Abudiel to a position of eminence in his court.

But despite the favorable attitude toward the Jews henceforth assumed by Alfonso and by his successors, the intellectual vigor of the Spanish Jews declined more and more. The bigoted sons of Asheri well succeeded in casting suspicions upon the propensity of the Spanish Jews to scientific pursuits, and thereby weakened their thirst for knowledge in general. The important representatives of the philosophic spirit belonged henceforth no longer to Spain but, if they arose at all, to Southern France for the most part. The Asherides who were responsible for the prevalence in Spain of the view that it is reprehensible to occupy oneself with higher questions concerning Judaism and its relation to philosophy failed to realize that they were thereby rendering the spirit of the Spanish Jews unfit for Talmudic investigations also. The Jews of Spain were not so well adapted to the one-sided study of the Talmud as were their German brethren. To deny them occupations with science was equivalent to destroying the buoyancy of their intellects and to incapacitating them for the permitted studies also. Even their love of song and their poetic endowments disappeared. If one or another sang at all, his product was mere rhyming, devoid of grace and thought. They came to resemble more and more the German Jews, whom they had hitherto treated with contempt. The charming poet, Santob de Carrion, who, in the days of Alfonso XI garbed his thoughts in pretty Spanish verse, was an isolated lark whose trills awakened no echo.

The eight sons of Asheri, his relatives who had come with him from Germany to Toledo, and his numerous disciples henceforth ruled Spanish Jewry with the German tendency towards Talmudic one-sidedness and religious austerity. The most noteworthy of Asheri's sons were Jacob and Judah, both of whom were as learned in the Talmud as they were ignorant in other branches.

Jacob ben Asheri (about 1280-1340) was an unfortunate man whose life was a chain of suffering and privations which, however, he bore with patience and without protest. Although his father had brought with him considerable wealth from Germany and had always lived in comfort, Jacob suffered the privations of poverty without, however, accepting a salary as a rabbi. Like all the Asherides, Jacob devoted himself entirely and exclusively to the Talmud, but he treated it, after all, with astounding erudition rather than with originality. His only merit consisted in bringing a certain order in the chaos of Talmudic scholarship, and satisfying the demands of his times for a definitive legal code. Utilizing all similar existing works, particularly that of Maimonides, Jacob compiled a second religious code in four parts (Turim, about 1340), devoted solely to practical laws—that is, to ritual, moral, matrimonial and civil laws in force in his days. With the compilation of this code there begins, in a measure, a new chapter in the religious development of Judaism.

Jacob's code indicates clearly in how far official Judaism had deteriorated since the days of Maimonides. In Maimonides' code reason predominates, and every ritual law is therein brought into relation, correctly or incorrectly, with the essential nature of religion. In Jacob's code, on the other hand, no pretence whatever is made at reason. The religious punctiliousness characteristic of the German-Jewish communities holds sway here and imposes new burdens and penances. In his code the elements regarded as binding by scrupulous rabbinic authorities outnumber by far those derived from the Talmud. One may almost say that, in his hands, Talmudic Judaism was transformed into a Rabbinic Judaism. Even cabalistic trifles found an entrance into his code. In form, presentation and language Jacob's code is rather careless. Nevertheless, it soon met with general recognition. Rabbis and judges took it as their standard and gave it preference to Maimonides' code. Here and there one or another contemporaneous rabbi may have ignored the new code; the great majority of rabbis not alone of Spain, but of Germany also, were glad to possess a ready-made book of laws that conveniently gave every desired information, that made far-reaching investigation unnecessary, and that was a matter of memory rather than of intellect. Thus Jacob's Tur became the indispensable manual for the knowledge of Judaism as the rabbis then understood that term.

His brother, Judah Asheri, who succeeded his father in the Toledo rabbinate, was the equal of Jacob in learning and virtue, but not in his ability to bring order out of chaos. He conducted his office with extraordinary conscientiousness and impartiality, and he could call the entire community to witness that he had not committed the slightest offence. But he did not feel at home in Spain, and is said to have advised his five sons in his will to return to Germany, the home of his family. However, the persecution of the German Jews during the year of the pestilence must have convinced his sons that Spain was, after all, preferable to Germany.

As already stated, the proscription of philosophy as a result of Abba Mari's officious zeal, Ibn Adret's decree of excommunication and Asheri's aversion to extra-Talmudic studies was so thoroughly successful that the sincerely pious avoided all contact with philosophy because they regarded it as the first step in the direction of heresy and infidelity, and the hypocrites despised it still more as proof of their orthodoxy. It required courage to study philosophy since it invoked upon its devotees the contempt and the suspicion of heresy. The cabala also contributed its share to lead that generation astray by its delusions. Only a few men in this period still held to a rational conception of Judaism—Isaac Pulgar of Avila, David ibn Albila of Portugal, and Joseph Caspi of Southern France. All these men, however, were devoid of independence and originality in their thinking.

Of greater importance and a man of greater gifts was Levi ben Gerson or Leon de Bagnols (also called Leo the Hebrew), better known under his literary name of Gersonides (1288-about 1345). He belonged to a learned family of Orange, and was a descendant of Levi of Villefranche, who indirectly caused the interdiction of science. Despite Ibn Adret's interdict, he was initiated into scientific studies in early youth, and before he had reached his thirtieth year he was engaged in writing a comprehensive, fundamental work on philosophy. Gersonides was a many-sided and thorough thinker, a foe to superficiality and sciolism. In astronomy he made such accurate observations that astronomers based their calculations upon them, and he invented an instrument by means of which more correct observations could be made in a starry sky. This invention filled him, whose prosaic mind was usually full of dry figures and logical deductions, with such enthusiasm that he composed a Hebrew poem, a sort of a riddle, in its honor. He wrote also on medical subjects and discovered remedies. He enjoyed a considerable reputation in his time even as a thorough Talmudist, and inasmuch as he loved order he wrote a methodology of the Mishnah.

Maestro Leon de Bagnols, as he was styled as a physician, who lived alternately in Orange, Perpignan and in Avignon, the residence of the popes at that time, was fortunate enough not to belong to the Jews of France proper, and, in consequence, escaped the sufferings incident to the expulsion of the Jews from that country and to the persecutions of the shepherds. His literary activity, that continued for more than twenty years (1321-43) began at that very time. A prolific writer, none of his works, however, attracted so much attention as the one on religious philosophy: "Milhamot Adonai" (The Wars of the Lord), in which he analyzes the boldest metaphysical questions calmly and recklessly without regard to the fact that he was exposing himself to contempt and to the charge of heresy. A man possessing the courage of his conviction, he asserted boldly that the truth must be stated even if it contradicts the Torah. For the Torah is not a tyrannical law that compels belief in falsehood. but rather leads to the recognition of the truth. If the resultant truth agrees with the expressions of the Bible, so much the better. Among Jewish thinkers only Spinoza resembles him in the recklessness of his thinking. Moreover, unlike many of his predecessors, he did not wish to hide the results of his investigation in the fields of religion and of science, but he made bold to oppose not only Maimonides and Averroes, but even Aristotle himself.

But with all his intellectual endowments, Gersonides exerted but little influence upon Judaism. The pious among his coreligionists regarded him as a heretic because of his reckless deductions and his equivocal attitude towards the dogma of creation, and nicknamed his chief work "The Wars of the Lord," "The Wars Against the Lord." Among Christian students, however, he met with all the greater recognition. At the instance of Pope Clement VI, his treatise on astronomy and on the instrument he invented was translated into Latin while Gersonides was yet living.

Moses Narboni, called Maestro Vidal, resembled Gersonides. An ardent devotee of philosophy, he divided his admiration between Maimonides and Averroes, and wrote commentaries on their works for the most part. His travels that led him from the foot of the Pyrenees to Toledo and back again to Soria (1345-62) enriched his knowledge. Every department of knowledge interested him, and he observed everything very closely. Trials and tribulations were powerless to dampen his ardor for the pursuit of the truth. Raging mobs fell upon the community of Cervera in consequence of the Black Death, and Vidal Narboni had to flee with the rest of the community and lost all his belongings and, what grieved him most, his valuable books. This, however, did not disturb him, and he continued his work at the point where it had been interrupted.

He was not, indeed, a truly independent thinker; he was a loyal Aristotelean as Averroes conceived him. Narboni, too, explained Judaism as a guide to the highest degree of theoretic and moral truths; the Torah has a twofold sense, a simple one for the unthinking masses, and a deeper one for the class of thinkers. Narboni, too, presented heretical views—that is, such as were repudiated by the general Jewish consciousness, but not with the boldness and frankness of Levi ben Gerson. He, too, caviled at miracles, and would rather have seen them eliminated from the Bible. But he defended the freedom of the human will on philosophic grounds. At an advanced age, as he was about to return to his native Provence from Soria, where he spent several years, death overtook him in the midst of his labors.

CHAPTER II

THE BLACK DEATH AND BUTCHERIES OF JEWS

(1335-1391)

The Jewish philosophers, Gersonides and Vidal Narboni, pondered over the relation of divine providence to man's freedom of the will; but they might well have occupied themselves with a more obscure problem, and one that concerned them more vitally —the problem of why Divine Providence had imposed such a tragic fate upon the Sons of Jacob, and why they had been chosen to empty the cup of sufferings to its dregs. The sorrows they had endured hitherto dwindled into a harmless mishap in comparison with the appalling agonies that awaited them towards the middle of the fourteenth century. A new cloud charged with destruction was to burst over them and crush them into annihilation; and ruin was to involve not only individuals, but the entire body of Jewry. The scattered sons of Israel were to realize that they formed a closely joined whole. It was not expulsion that awaited them, but horrible death in all its phases, connected with torture and agony. This death-dance began in Germany. The emperor, Louis the Bavarian, was said to have treated the Jews with so much favor that they were inflated with pride. This, however, is an idle calumny, both against the emperor and against the Jews. No German ruler so mistreated his bondsmen, pawned them and sold them as the rival of Philip the Fair. Unlike Philip, however, he desired not the death or the conversion of the Jews, but only their wealth. Louis imposed an entirely new tax upon the German Jews, the so-called "golden penny offering." Every Jew and Jewess above the age of twelve, and possessed of at least twenty florins, had to pay the king or the emperor an annual poll-tax of one florin. His right to this special tax, if the question of right was raised at all where Jews were concerned, was probably based on the theory that the German emperors had inherited all the rights of the Roman emperors, and inasmuch as the Jews had to pay an annual tax to the latter since the days of Vespasian and Titus, the German emperors, their direct heirs, also had the right to demand the golden penny from the Jews. During Louis' reign numerous massacres of Jews occurred as a result of the disturbances and civil wars. Two years in succession (1336-7) a well-organized horde of peasants and riffraff that styled themselves "Jew-Killers," under the leadership of two depraved noblemen, called "Kings Armleder," from the circumstance that they wore a strip of leather wound on their arms, vented their fury upon the Jews. Fanaticism and superstition played a part on this occasion, too, as they did in the persecutions under Rindfleish. One of the Armleders pretended to have received a hint from above to inflict upon the Jews the torture and the wounds endured by Jesus, and to avenge the crucifixion in their blood. Five thousand peasants, armed with pitchforks, axes, flails and pikes, gathered about the Armleders and instituted a massacre among the

Jews who lived in Alsace and in the Rhineland as far as Suabia. As was often the case on the occasion of such persecutions, many Jews killed their children with their own hands to prevent them from falling into the hands of the Church, and then committed suicide. The protection of the emperor came too late or was not effective enough. The emperor succeeded in the end in securing possession of one of the Armleders and had him beheaded.

At the same time a bloody persecution, prompted by greed, took place in Bavaria. The aldermen of the city of Deckendorf (or Deggendorf) wished to set themselves and the burghers free from the obligations due their Jewish creditors, and to enrich themselves in addition. To accomplish this purpose recourse was had again to the fiction of a desecration of the host on the part of Jews, with the usual embellishment of miracles. Upon a day previously appointed (September 30, 1337), with the tolling of the church bell as a signal, the knight, Hartmann of Deckendorf, with his horsemen entered the gates of Deckendorf that were opened to him, and in conjunction with the burghers fell upon the defenseless Jews, burned them and appropriated their property. In honor of the miracles performed by the host pierced by the Jews a church was erected and raised to a place of pilgrimage. The pointed instrument the Jews employed in piercing it, as well as the pierced host itself, are preserved therein as relics, and for centuries were displayed for the edification of believers, and are still pointed out to-day.

From Deckendorf the butcheries spread to Bavaria, Bohemia, Moravia and Austria, and thousands of Jews perished amidst various kinds of torture. In Vienna and Ratisbon, however, the burghers protected the Jews from the raging mob. The emperor then had his hands too full with the pope and the king of France to take any action with reference to this disturbance of the public peace and the massacre of his bondmen, but his near kinsman, Duke Henry of Bavaria and the Palatinate, extended his clemency to all the burghers of Deckendorf "for having burned and ruined all our Jews," and permitted them to retain their plunder. It is true that Pope Benedict XII ordered the bishop of Passau to investigate carefully the alleged desecration of the host on the part of the Jews, and in case, as he anticipated, the innocence of the Jews be proven to apply canonical severity to the authors of such a horrible lie that caused the murder and the plunder of so many Jews. But canonical punishment availed naught against the barbarity of the then Christian world. Hardly a decade later the Jews learned the wretched fact that neither the sympathy of the pope nor the protection of the German emperor was of any practical value to them whatever. For there soon followed a period of the utmost wretchedness for the Jews of nearly every part of Europe where the cross held sway, to which the butcheries of Armleder and of Deckendorf were merely a feeble prelude.

The apparent good fortune that smiled upon the Spanish Jews under Alfonso XI served only to call down upon their brethren of the other Christian countries the most extensive, thorough, indescribably horrible persecution. The Black Death that raged for more than four years (1348-52), annihilated one-fourth of humanity (about 25,000,000) and crushed every noble emotion, transformed the Christians of Europe into veritable angels of death for the Jews; they determined to exterminate all Jewry, root and branch, and to deliver over to torture, to the sword or to fire those whom the plague had spared. It sufficiently characterizes the training that the Church inculcated upon its adherents when it is stated that neither the Mohammedans, nor the Mongolians, nor any other barbaric people visited by the plague ever thought of holding the Jews responsible for the fearful catastrophe; the Christians alone regarded the Jews as the originators of the plague, and they alone it was who massacred the latter in great numbers. The Church had preached so often and so persistently that the Jews were murderers of Christians and of children that her faithful sons finally believed it and wished to exemplify her teaching. Inasmuch as, owing to the exigency of the times, all discipline and order, obedience and submissiveness had ceased, the effects of the ecclesiastical training manifested themselves in the most horrible form. The Black Death did, indeed, claim Jewish victims too; but inasmuch as the number of their victims was proportionately much smaller than that of the Christians, due possibly to greater moderation in their manner of living and to the greater self-sacrifice on the part of the nurses, there arose the suspicion that the Jews who were anyway in the habit of slaughtering Christian children annually had also poisoned wells and springs, and even the very air, in order to exterminate the Christians of all countries at one blow.

But where was this comprehensive plan conceived and carried into execution? Who had sufficient authority to be able to induce all European Jews to embark in common upon such a dangerous undertaking as the poisoning of Christians? The answer was evident enough. The Spanish Jews, who possessed great power and great influence over the communities of all Europe, must have been the ones who conceived the nefarious scheme for the destruction of the Christians, dispatched envoys everywhere with doses of poison, and induced all the Jews to carry out their commands under threat of excommunication. The order for the execution of this scheme emanated from Toledo, in a measure the Jewish capital, and was issued by a Jacob á Pascate, who came from Toledo and settled in Chambéry (Savoy), whence he dispatched a whole host of Jewish poisoners to all countries and cities, and was assisted by a Rabbi Peyret, of Chambéry, and by a wealthy Jew named Aboget. The poison which the Jewish necromancers prepared was variously reported as concocted out of the flesh of basilisks, of spiders, frogs and lizards, or of Christian hearts and the dough of hosts.

Such idiotic tales, invented by the ignorant and the malicious, and enlarged upon and exaggerated by heated imagination were believed in not alone by the ignorant masses, but also by the higher classes. The courts of justice made earnest efforts to get at the truth, and employed for this purpose the means which Christian Medievalism applied with great skill in verifying a suspicion—torture.

These tales of well-poisoning on the part of the Jews first found credence in Southern France, where the Black Death claimed its victims as early as the beginning of 1348. In one of the cities of Southern France the entire Jewish community—men, women and children, together with their sacred books—was burned in one day (middle of May). From this point the belief in well-poisoning spread to Catalonia and Aragon. In Barcelona the mobs killed twenty persons and plundered the Jewish houses; but the better element of the Christian population defended the Jews and dispersed the mobs, assisted by a fearful storm accompanied by thunder and lightning, that happened to break just then.

Several days later the community of Cervera was attacked, eighteen Jews were killed and the rest forced to seek flight. All the communities of

Northern Spain trembled with apprehension, supplicated Heaven for mercy, and barricaded themselves behind the walls of their quarters. In Aragon, however, the higher classes stood by the Jews. Pope Clement VI, the one who took an interest in Gersonides' astronomic labors, and who locked himself in his chamber on the approach of the plague, trembling with the fear of death, sympathized with the Jews. He issued a bull (beginning of July) in which he interdicted, on pain of excommunication, the killing of Jews without judicial trial, their forcible conversion or the plundering of their property. This bull possibly had some effect in Southern France, but not in the rest of Christendom. One country imitated the other. The beautiful region about the Lake of Geneva was first transformed into a scene of bloody persecutions. Upon the order of the then Duke of Amadeus of Savoy several Jews suspected of well-poisoning were arrested and imprisoned in two cities on the Lake of Geneva, Chillon and Chatel. In Chillon several Jews under torture beyond endurance confessed the crime of well-poisoning. One of their number, by name of Aquet, in the midst of his torture, exaggerated his confessions beyond all belief, and stated that he had placed the poison in Venice, Apulia, Calabria and Toulouse in France. All these confessions were written down by the secretaries and attested to by signatures. To lend an appearance of trustworthiness to these confessions, the cunning judges added the statement that the accused were tortured but slightly. On the strength of these confessions not only the accused and those who confessed, but all the Jews of the region of the Lake of Geneva were condemned to death by fire.

From this district the report of the proven guilt of the Jews spread to Switzerland, and there also the bloody scenes were repeated. The councillors of Berne sent for the proceedings of the trial of Chillon, placed several Jews under torture in their town, likewise extorted confessions from them, and condemned all the Jews to the stake (September). Thereupon they sent formal notice to Basel, Freiburg, Strassburg, Cologne and other cities that the Jews were beyond doubt guilty of the crimes imputed to them. Pope Clement VI exerted himself once more in behalf of the Jews, and issued a bull to Catholic Christendom in which he emphasized the absolute innocence of the Jews of the crimes imputed to them, exhorted the clergy once more to take the Jews under their protection and excommunicate the slanderers and executioners (September). His efforts, however, were futile. The child became mightier than its parent; folly more powerful than the papacy.

The extermination of the Jews proceeded nowhere with such thoroughness and such exasperation as in the holy Roman-German empire. In vain did the newly elected emperor, Charles V, issue edict upon edict forbidding the Christians to injure his bondmen, the Jews. Even if his influence in Germany had been greater than it was he could not have induced the Germans to spare the Jews. The Germans were moved not merely by the desire to plunder the Jews, as a frank chronicler of that period, Closener of Strassburg, remarks: "Their ready money was the poison that killed the Jews." The Germans, in naive stupidity and in primeval simplicity, actually believed that the Jews with a few drops of poison polluted the Rhine, the Danube, and all streams, springs, wells, fields and meadows. As in the district of the Lake of Geneva the Jew Jacob á Pascate and Rabbi Peyret, of Chambéry, were invented as the persons who distributed the poison, the Germans ascribed similar crimes to a rich Jew, Moses of Mayence.

The "cautious," wise magistracies of many cities walled in the wells and springs to protect the people against the drinking of poison, and only rainwater and melted snow were used for drinking purposes. Should not the Jews, the cause of this evil, atone for it?

There were, however, a few clear-headed men who refused to share in the general belief that the Jews were responsible for the great mortality. These few who, despite the danger that threatened them, felt and acted like human beings, deserve a place in history. These men were the councillors of Strassburg, the burgomaster of that city, Conrad von Wintertur; the assessor, Gosse Sturm, and the master mechanic, Peter Schwarber. These men exerted themselves to the utmost to prove the innocence of the Jews, to defend and protect them against the fanatic attacks of the mob, and even of the bishop. The city councils of Basel and Freiburg also advocated the cause of the wretched Jews. The council of Cologne wrote to that of Strassburg that it would follow the example of the latter with reference to the Jews.

A conference that was to decide the fate of the Jews was held in Benfelden (Alsace), in which Bishop Berthold of Strassburg, barons, nobles and representatives of cities participated. The representatives of Strassburg stood up courageously for the Jews even against the bishop, who, either out of malice or of stupidity, was decidedly in favor of the extermination of the Jews; but they were outvoted. The conference decided to expel all the Jews from the cities of the Upper Rhine (end of 1348). With this decision of Benfelden, the Jews of Alsace who had hardly recovered from the wounds inflicted upon them by the Armleders and their bands were outlawed. Here and there they were either burned or expelled, and those who were banished from the cities were simply murdered by the infuriated country people. The Jews of Basel shared a similar fate. They were driven on an island of the Rhine, in a house especially erected for that purpose, and were burned without ceremony. A solemn oath was taken on that occasion not to permit the settlement of Jews in that city within a period of two hundred years. A week later the turn of the Jews of Freiburg came. The community of Speyer was the first victim among the Rhenish communities. The populace banded together and killed many Jews; some Jews burned themselves in their houses, and a few submitted to baptism.

The council of Strassburg, nevertheless, persisted in protecting the Jews. The burgomaster, Wintertur, addressed letters everywhere in order to be able to show the citizenship that was daily growing more turbulent favorable reports in proof of the innocence of the Jews. From many places, however, the reports received were unfavorable. Only the council of Cologne encouraged Wintertur to persist in his defense of the Jews in the hope that many larger or smaller cities might follow the example of Strassburg. But the council of Strassburg could not long resist the turbulence of the populace. The trade guilds formed in bands, proceeded with their banners to the minster, and would not disperse until Wintertur and his two colleagues were deposed. The result was evident. The Jews of Strassburg, two thousand souls, were incarcerated, and on the following day were dragged to the cemetery. A wooden scaffold was erected, and the Jews were compelled to mount it while it was set on fire. Only those who, in their despair, embraced the cross, were spared; the rest were burned in cold blood. The new council decided in addition that no Jews be received by Strassburg within the space of one hundred years. The property of the Jews was distributed among the burghers.

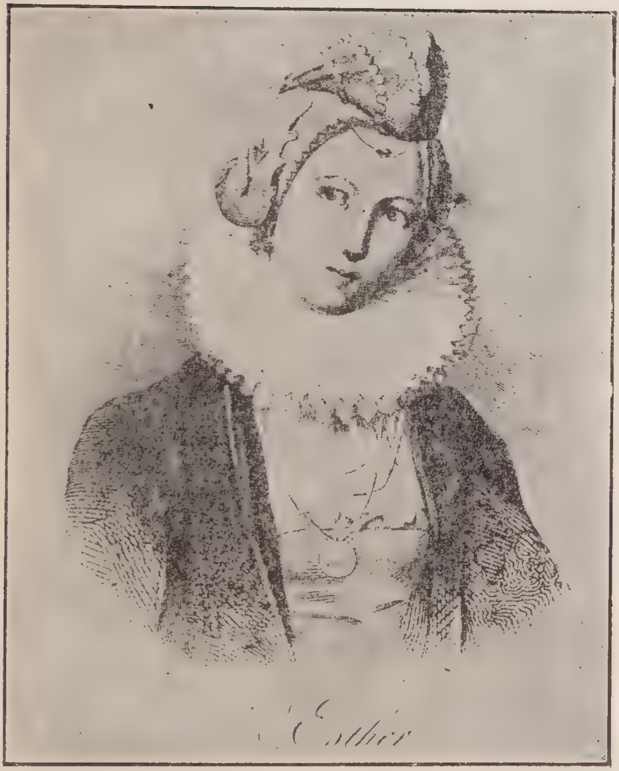
Thereupon the turn came to the oldest community of Germany, Worms. The Jews of that city had all the greater reason to fear the worst, since the emperor, Charles IV, in recognition of services rendered him, had formerly transferred their lives and property to that city, declaring that "the city and the burghers of Worms may regard and dispose of the Jews as their own property." The burghers thus had the absolute right to do with the Jews whatever they pleased. When, therefore, the council decided to burn them, the Jews decided to anticipate the executioners. Nearly all the Jews of Worms set their houses on fire, and more than four hundred perished. Only a few escaped. The Jews of Oppenheim and Frankfort-on-the-Main similarly burned themselves in their own houses to escape torture (end of July).

As though one mania did not suffice to exterminate Israel, another one manifested itself that tended to degenerate Christianity into a new species of Baal worship. The devastating plague of the Black Death was generally regarded in Christendom as an expression of divine anger over the grievous sinfulness of the people and the priests and suggested the thought that it could be averted by extraordinary penance. In Germany bands of men wandered about who, like the priests of Baal of old, lacerated their half-naked bodies with straps until the blood flowed and attracted crowds everywhere by their dreadful songs. The flagellants aroused the religious zeal of the masses to the point of frenzy, and Jews were the first victims. Some flagellants made the extermination of the Jews their particular activity and called themselves "Jew-Beaters" with a certain pride. It was these flagellants who incited the massacre in Frankfort. But the

Jews of Mayence, when their turn came, determined not to permit themselves to be slaughtered like sheep. Three hundred Jews armed themselves and killed two hundred of their assailants. This, of course, infuriated the entire Christian population that likewise armed itself. The Jews fought for a long time, and when they were driven back by the superior strength of their enemies they set fire to their own houses (August 24). Nearly six thousand Jews are said to have perished in Mayence, and the largest German community was completely destroyed.

On the very day when the Jews of Mayence were slaughtered an attack was made upon the Jews of the ancient community of Cologne, as well as upon those of the neighboring towns who had sought refuge in that city. The city council had protected them for a long time against the stupidly credulous populace; the councillors regarded it as their duty to follow in the footsteps of their fathers, who had ever been protectors of the Jews. But as the pestilence had destroyed all discipline, and the respect of authority had disappeared, the city council had to yield, and in Cologne, like in many other places, the lower classes fell upon the Jews. The latter defended themselves in part; fires broke out here and there, and in the end all the Jews who were present in Cologne were exterminated.

Like an uncontrollable conflagration, the butchery of the Jews spread throughout Germany. Who can enumerate all the cities from the Alps to the North Sea and from the Rhine to the Oder in which Jews were burned or burned themselves. Thus persecutions broke out also in Bavaria and Suabia, and the ancient communities perished; Augsburg at the very beginning, Wurzburg, Munich and many others later. The Jews of Nuremberg who, because of the commercial importance of that city,



Esterka

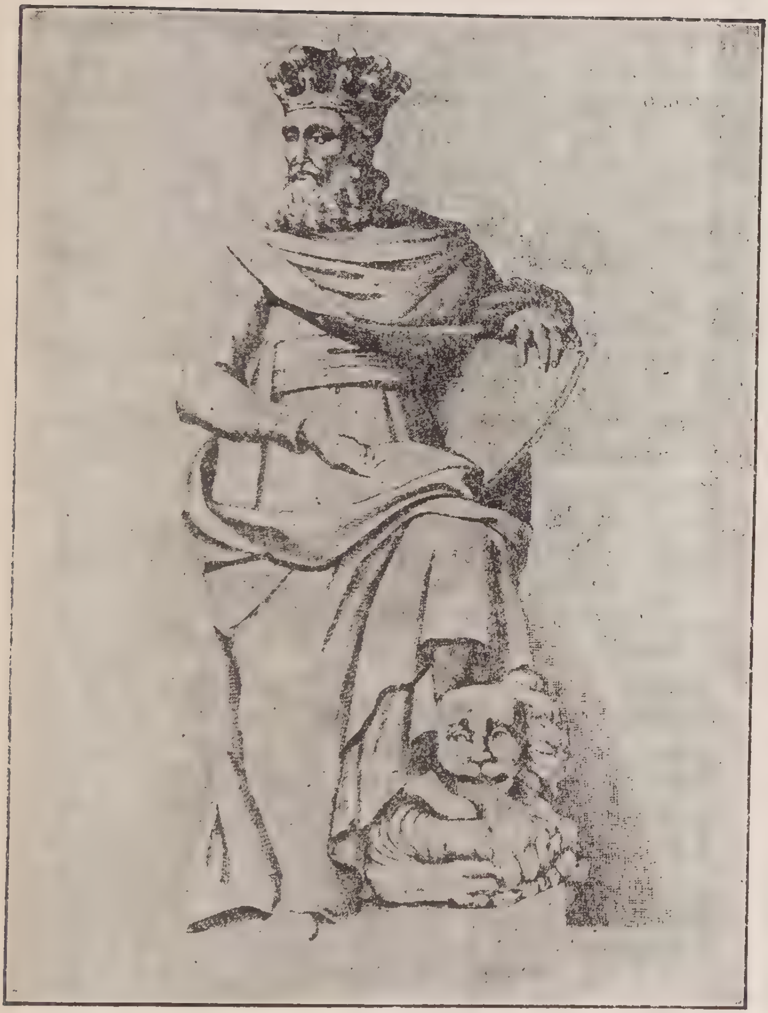
(From Chodzkos' Histoire de Pologne.)

had accumulated wealth, occupied stately houses in the marketplace, and naturally had many outstanding claims, particularly excited the ill-will of the Christians who were indebted to them. Their extermination was so certain that the emperor, Charles IV, exculpated the magistracy of Nuremberg in advance of all responsibility in case any harm befell the Jews against its will. The Christians erected a stake in a place afterwards called the "Jewish Hill," and burned or slew all the Jews who did not succeed in leaving the city (December 6, 1349). In Ratisbon, too, the populace demanded the extermination, or at least the expulsion of the Jews, and bloody attacks were feared every day. But the city council and the better element of the citizenship publicly took a solemn vow in the presence of the burgomaster, Berthold Epoltspecht, that they would faithfully protect and defend the Jews, and they kept the vow most conscientiously. Thus the most ancient community of Southern Germany was spared.

Outside of Germany, even among the peoples that were still in a state of barbarism but comparatively slight persecutions occurred. The king of Hungary, Louis, a religious zealot, it is true, expelled the Jews from Hungary at this time, not, however, as poisoners, but as unbelievers who had resisted his scheme of conversion. In Poland, likewise decimated by the plague, the Jews suffered but one slight persecution because they were protected by Casimir the Great. At the request of some Jews who had rendered the king some services, Casimir, in the second year of his reign (October 9, 1334), confirmed the privileges bestowed upon the Jews by Boleslaw Pius, duke of Calish, nearly a century before. Casimir is said to have had a Jewish concubine named Esther (Esterka), and out of love to her to have conferred important privileges and favors upon several Jews, possibly her relatives.

As was the case on the eastern border of Germany, the Jews were persecuted on its western border also, in Belgium, in the period of the Black Death. In Brussels, a wealthy and clever Jew who enjoyed the regard of the then Duke of Brabant, John II, appealed to the duke for protection against the flagellants who had arrived in Belgium, and John gladly promised the necessary protection for the Jews. But the enemies of the Jews had meanwhile obtained from the duke's son a promise of impunity for the shedding of Jewish blood, with the result that the entire Jewish community of Brussels, about five hundred souls, was exterminated.

The communities of Catalonia that, next to those of Provence, were chosen as the first victims in the year of the plague, conceived a plan by which to obviate similar outbreaks of fanaticism. In the first place, all the Jews of the kingdom of Aragon were to create a common fund for the purpose of rendering assistance to such of their members as were to sustain losses as a result of an attack or a persecution. In addition deputies were to be chosen who were to appeal to the king to prevent the recurrence of such atrocities by means of stringent laws. The king was to be requested to obtain a bull from the pope to the effect that Jews were not to be held responsible for natural catastrophes or desecrations of the host, and to be urged to restore to the Jews judicial autonomy, to enable them to punish informers and traitors in their own midst. The deputies, two each for Aragon and Catalonia, and one each for Valencia and Mallorca, were to be given plenary powers to act in behalf of all the communities, and particularly to look after their interests in the sessions of the Cortes. This plan, however, came to naught as a result of differences



STATUE OF CASIMIR THE GREAT

of opinion. It would have proved futile anyway, for even though princes and the pope were convinced that the Jews did not poison the wells, the people as a whole could not be convinced of the innocence of the Jews. Since the Black Death the Jews were regarded as dangerous enemies of Christians, and every crime imputed to them found credence. In the romantic tale of a reckless debtor who pledged a part of his body's weight in case of neglect of payment, and of a hard creditor who insisted upon the pound of flesh, told with many turns and hitherto ever regarded as harmless, a tale in which a feudal lord and his vassal, or a nobleman and burgher figured in this tale, an Italian novelist, Giovanni Fiorentino, in the days subsequent to the Black Death, introduced a Jew. A Jew of Mestre insisted upon cutting out a pound of flesh pledged to him by a Christian of Venice in order to have the satisfaction of depriving a Christian of his life. Of such inhumanity towards Christians were the Jews held capable at that time.

It is remarkable, though, that despite the venomous hatred entertained by the Christian peoples towards the Jews, the latter soon became indispensable to the former. Not only princes, but also cities and even priests were possessed by a veritable passion "to have Jews." But a few years after the bloody fury in consequence of the Black Death German burghers quickly forgot their oath not to admit Jews within their walls for a period of one or two hundred years and were eager to receive them again. The bishop of Augsburg acquired from Emperor Charles IV the right "to harbor and to receive Jews." The electors, spiritual and temporal, were determinedly intent upon curtailing the hitherto exclusive right of the German emperor to possess bondsmen, and upon transferring that authority to themselves. Gerlach, the then archbishop of Mayence, exerted himself in particular to wrest that right from the emperor, Charles. At the imperial diet, held at Nuremberg (November, 1355), where a sort of a German imperial constitution, "the Golden Bull," was adopted, the emperor conferred upon all electors, for all time, next to their titles to mines of metal and salt that were discovered, also the right to possess Jews; in other words, alongside the wealth of metal and salt mines, he bestowed upon them an additional source of wealth, the Jews. This prerogative the emperor conceded only to electors; he retained his rights over the bondsmen who lived under the power of petty princes or cities. The Jews were thus at once repelled and attracted, avoided and sought after, despised and courted. But they knew full well that they were tolerated not for their own sake. How could they help concentrating all their powers upon the accumulation of money, when it was that alone that could acquire for them the right to their miserable existence?

The rulers of France, like those of Germany, out of financial considerations, also sought to induce the Jews to return to that country. Owing to the frequent wars with England, and particularly since the captivity of King John (Sept. 1356), France entered upon a crisis that threatened to reduce her to a province of the English crown. At this juncture, the Jews with their financial operations appeared as a godsend to the young dauphin Charles, who acted as regent during his father's captivity. A clever Jew, Manessier (Manecier) de Vesou, labored with great zeal to accomplish the return of the Jews to France whence they were expelled half a century before, readmitted and rebanished. If the impoverished country or the court was to derive benefits from the return of the Jews, such return must be on a large scale. Accordingly, the captive king issued an edict (March, 1360) that, with the consent of the higher and lower clergy, the nobility, gentry and citizens, permitted all Jews to emigrate into France and to settle there for a period of twenty years, with the right to live anywhere they chose in the country, and to own not only houses, but fields also. Of course, they were expected to pay for these privileges. Each head of a family, upon entering the country must pay fourteen florins for himself and one for each member of his family, and, in addition, an annual Jew-tax of seven florins, and one florin for each member of his family. In return for this special tax, the Jews were not to be subjected to the arbitrariness of courts and officials, but were to have a chief judge of their own, a prince of blood royal, as their protector. Misdemeanors and crimes in their own midst were to be judged and punished by two rabbis in conjunction with four laymen who were to possess supreme authority. They were to be beyond the power of the nobility, and protected against the chicanery of the clergy. They were not to be forced to attend Christian worship and listen to priestly sermons; their sacred books, including copies of the Talmud, like their property in general, were to be safe from confiscation, and the burning of the Talmud in Paris was not to be repeated. Their business was to be protected above all. They were to be permitted to loan money at as high a rate as eighty per cent., to receive pledges, and their liens were to be protected by many legal safeguards. Manessier de Vesou who labored so zealously for the return of the Jews to France acquired an eminent position at court. He was appointed to supervise the punctual payment of the entrance money and the annual tax for which he was made responsible. As a result of these privileges Jews emigrated into France in great numbers.

As a matter of course, these extensive Jewish privileges were looked at askance in some quarters. Christian physicians with whom Jewish physicians competed complained that the latter did not stand examinations and were mere quacks. Judges and officials who were given no authority over the Jews and were consequently denied the opportunity to extort money from them complained of abuses on the part of the Jews. The clergy complained that the Jews were not wearing the prescribed badge. The irresolute King John therefore again imposed restrictions upon the Jews. But as soon as the statesmanlike dauphin, under the name of Charles V, ascended the throne and took the reins of power in his rigorous hands, he restored to the Jews the privileges violated by his father, and extended the period of their presence in the country. He put a stop to the proceedings of the clergy who carried their hatred of the Jews to the point of barbarity. At the instance of the high prelates of the Church, the clergy of Southern France preached that Christians were to have no communication with Jews on pain of excommunication, and must give or sell them no fire, water, bread or wine; and, in this manner, kindled the flames of fanaticism again. To counteract this fanaticism, the governor Languedoc issued an order, in the name of the king, to all officials, lay and clerical, to punish relentlessly all those who took hostile steps against the Jews. Under the reign of Charles V, the existence of the Jews of France was therefore a tolerable one.

But though the Jews of France and Germany were allowed to breathe freely again after such horrible butcheries, their life was merely a physical one; their souls remained dead, their intellectual power had vanished. In France, where in the course of over two centuries, from the days of Rashi to the last Tosafists, the study of the Talmud had reached its highest development, there was manifested such an astounding ignorance of the Talmud among the immigrants that a beginning had to be made all over again. The privileges of King John and Charles, it is true, do speak of rabbis who were to possess authority to punish unworthy Jews, but there was hardly one profound Talmudist in France, and only five mediocre Talmudic scholars, according to the admission of contemporaries themselves. The leading Talmudic scholar was Mattathias ben Joseph Provenci. So highly respected by King Charles V that he and his family were given exemption from the wearing of the Jewish badge, Mattathias was in a position to improve conditions. He established once more an academy in Paris, gathered disciples about him, taught them the Talmud, ordained them as rabbis, and had new copies of the Talmud made for them. As a result of his zeal, Mattathias was chosen chief rabbi and chief judge in civil and criminal cases, and was acknowledged as such by the king. It was his academy that supplied the communities with rabbis.

In Germany, the land whose rabbis were once so proud of their hereditary learning, the Black Death, with its consequent butcheries and expulsions, so thinned the ranks of Talmudic scholars that here, too, intellectual poverty ensued. Sciolists and men otherwise unfit had to be permitted to exercise rabbinical functions for lack of better material. To obviate this evil, a learned rabbi of Vienna, Meir ben Baruch Halevi (about 1370-90) issued an ordinance that no Talmudic student be permitted to exercise rabbinical functions unless he was first ordained by a duly authorized rabbi. This ordinance proceeded not from any presumption on the part of its author, but from the exigencies of the times.

The calamities due to the Black Death and its consequences had obliterated old recollections to such an extent that the Rhenish rabbis, owing to differences of opinion with reference to matrimonial laws, felt necessitated to summon a synod for the sole purpose of reviving old ordinances. At the synod of Mayence (1381), several rabbis in conjunction with communal representatives, revived the old ordinances of Speyer, Worms and Mayence (Takanot Shum); among others that a childless widow be released from the levirate marriage and receive a fixed portion of her husband's estate. However, not a single one of the rabbis who participated in this synod achieved any fame in the Jewish world.

The Black Death had devastated Spain also, but the population of that country was, on the whole, more intelligent than that of other countries, and never dreamt of holding the Jews responsible for the castastrophe. In Toledo and in Seville the plague claimed many prominent members of the community belonging to the families of Abulafia and Asheri, and the grief of the survivors is indicated in the still extant inscriptions on the tombstones of the Toledo Jewish cemetery. King Alfonso XI of Castile was also a victim of the malignant pestilence, but it occurred to no one to charge the Jews with responsibility for this death. May not this circumstance serve as the standard of the cultural scale of the various European nations?

Under Don Pedro (1350-69), Alfonso's son and successor, the influence of the Castilian Jews reached an unprecedented height. It was the dying glory of their eminent position in Spain to be succeeded soon by the shadows of night. His enemies branded him as "Pedro the Cruel," an appellation in which his friendship towards the Jews had a share, although he was not more cruel than many of his predecessors and successors. Don Pedro was a child of nature in the good and evil sense of that term who would not submit to the restraint of court etiquette and of political consideration. The treachery and perfidy of his bastard brothers, the sons of Leonora de Guzman, who had unconsciously saved the Jews from certain destruction, provoked the king to a bloody retaliation. His mother, the Portuguese Infanta Donna Maria, was humiliated and mortified by her husband at the instance of his concubine Leonora de Guzman. Don Pedro himself had been slighted because of his bastard brothers, particularly because of his older half-brother, Don Henry de Trastamara. His first act upon his accession must needs be to obtain justice for his humiliated mother and to humble and render harmless her rival. That he tolerated his bastard brothers proves that he was not so very cruel after all. He dealt severely with the grandees and hidalgos who trampled right and humanity under foot, and treated the people with arrogant contempt. Don Pedro thus incurred the enmity of that class, too; the people, however, when they were not misled, were extremely loyal to him. The Jews too were faithful to him, and risked their lives and property for his cause because he protected them against violence, and did not treat them as outcasts. It is true that they suffered grievously on his account, but this suffering was of a political rather than a religious character. As zealous partisans and fellow combatants, they shared in the defeat of their party-chief in common with his Christian followers.

When Don Pedro ascended the throne, an aged Jewish poet ventured to greet him with a well formed Spanish didactic poem. This poet, Santob (Shem Tob) de Carrion (about 1300-50), was completely forgotten in Jewish literature, but Christian writers preserved his memory and his verses, and his work well deserved preservation. Santob enriched Spanish poetry with his tender and melodious verses, and gave expression to the practical philosophy of his age in beautiful strophes. His "Counsel and Instruction" dedicated to Don Pedro bears the character of maxims and proverbs, and he freely drew his golden sayings from the treasure of the Talmud and the neo-Hebraic poets. Santob did not hesitate to criticise the shortcomings of his coreligionists who had become rich through the royal favor, thereby arousing the prejudice of the hidalgos against the Jews; nor did he fear to tell the young king some bitter truths by holding up the mirror of virtue and by exposing vice in all its ugliness.

King Don Pedro conferred special favors upon eminent Jews. His tutor and all-powerful minister Don Juan Alfonso de Albuquerque recommended to the king the appointment of an able Jew, who had rendered the former many services, to the ministry of finance, and Don Pedro acted upon this recommendation without regard to a former decree of the Cortes that disabled Jews from holding such an office. This man was Don Samuel ben Meir Allavi, a member of the aristocratic Abulafia-Halevi family of Toledo. Don Samuel soon became the confidant (privado) of the king who consulted him on every important question of state. Two inscriptions, one written during his lifetime, the other after his death, speak in high terms of the piety, probity and generosity of Don Pedro's finance minister.

Another favorite of Don Pedro was Abraham ibn Zarzal who was his physician and astrologer. On the whole, Don Pedro surrounded himself with Jews to such an extent that his enemies referred to his court as "the Jewish court." He protected the Jews of his country energetically, either as a result of personal inclination or of the influence of his Jewish favorites. When he opened the Cortes of Valladolid for the first time (May, 1351), and the Cortes presented him with a petition to repeal the judicial autonomy of the Jews and to permit them no longer to have alcaldes (Judges) of their own, the king replied that the Jews, as a weak people, needed special protection, and Christian judges could not be depended upon to treat them with fairness and impartiality.

A marriage affair that led to party conflicts in which the Castilian Jews participated, undermined their favorable position in Spain also. While the courtiers exerted themselves to induce the youthful king to contract an alliance with Blanca, the daughter of the French Duke of Bourbon, Don Pedro fell in love with a gifted and beautiful noblewoman, Maria de Padilla. Rumor had it that he had formerly betrothed himself to her in the presence of witnesses. Don Pedro recalled the proposal of marriage made to Blanca in his name; the Princess of Bourbon, however, came to Spain, or was sent by her ambitious relatives to force her marriage upon the king. But this step brought down misfortunes upon herself and the country. The immediate relatives of the king plotted so long that the marriage with Blanca was solemnized, but the king did not spend more than two days in her society. This added new fuel to the smoldering fire of former party divisions, inasmuch as some grandees sided with the rejected queen, and others with Maria de Padilla. As Blanca was known to be ill-disposed towards the Jews, and had made no secret of her hostile intentions towards them, the Jews of Spain, as a matter of self-defense, with Don Samuel at their head, embraced the cause of

Maria de Padilla. Dissensions and civil wars ensued. Albuquerque, who was first opposed to the queen and afterwards embraced her cause, fell into disfavor, and Samuel succeeded him as the intimate adviser of the king. Don Samuel always accompanied the king in his expeditions.

On one occasion, his enemies, headed by his bastard brothers, decoyed the king into the fortress of Toro. The conspirators immediately barred the castle and admitted only a few of the king's attendants, including Don Samuel, whom they seized and imprisoned. The king was kept a captive in Toro. Strange to say, while the conspirators put to death several grandees, and even the grand master of Calatrava, they spared the favorite Samuel. The latter succeeded in escaping together with the king, and, because of his loyalty, the king showered still greater favors upon him. He had, besides, so faithfully and ably administered the financial affairs of the kingdom that the king was enabled to accumulate a considerable treasure. The treacherous captivity of the king forms a turning point in Don Pedro's reign. A desperate civil war ensued in Castile in consequence of the dissensions that incited the king to cruel reprisals. The Jewish favorites, however, had no hand in these cruelties, even the enemies of the Jews exonerated Don Samuel from any responsibility for them. The bastard brothers, with their followers, sought in the first place to become masters of the capital, Toledo. But Don Pedro had a strong following in the capital that included all the Jews, and the adherents of the king refused to permit the rebels to enter the city. Secretly admitted by their friends through one gate, the rebels assaulted a suburb of the city where many Jews resided. In Alcana street they slaughtered nearly twelve thousand persons, men, women and children. The enemy, however, could not break into the inner city because the Jews had barricaded the gates, and offered an armed resistance, supported energetically by the knights of the royal party. Several days later Don Pedro entered Toledo, was received with acclaim by his partisans, and wreaked his vengeance upon his brothers' supporters.

By virtue of his shrewd counsel, his financial administration and his zeal in behalf of Maria de Padilla, Don Samuel enjoyed the highest favor of the king and possessed more power than the grandees of the kingdom. He accumulated immense wealth, and eighty black slaves served in his house. But it seems that he lacked the magnanimity that would have prompted him to utilize the present favorable hour for the promotion of the future interests of his people and his religion. He probably did "seek the welfare of his people" as an inscription testifies, but he did not understand wherein that "welfare" consisted. He certainly did protect them against violence and hatred, appointed some of them to important offices and gave them an opportunity to acquire riches, but he was not to his coreligionists what Hasdai ibn Shaprut and Samuel ibn Nagdela were. Don Samuel, it seems, took little interest in the promotion of Jewish science and poetry. He did, indeed, build synagogs in several communities of Castile, and a particularly magnificent one in Toledo, but he did not establish a single academy for the study of the Talmud.

This magnificent Toledo synagog that graces the city to this day as a church was built partly in Gothic and partly in Moorish style, as were most Spanish churches at that time. Within finely carved arabesques in the walls, the Eightieth Psalm, in white Hebrew letters, stands out in bold relief upon a green background. Upon the north and south sides there are inscriptions in bas-relief that perpetuate the merits of the prince Samuel Levi ben Meir. In these inscriptions the community renders thanks to God "who did not remove His mercy from His people and had raised men who had saved them from the hands of the enemy. Though Israel has no longer a king, God has caused one of His people to find favor in the eyes of King Pedro who has raised him above all the grandees, has appointed him adviser in his kingdom, and conferred almost royal honors upon him." The name of King Don Pedro is set off in large letters as though to attract attention to the fact that that prince stood in intimate relations with the Jews. In conclusion the wish is expressed that Samuel might live to see the restoration of the Temple and to officiate therein with his sons as Levites.

The year in which this synagog was completed (1357), happened to coincide with the one foretold for the coming of the Messiah by the astronomer Abraham ben Hiyya, the rabbi and cabalist Nahmanides a century before, and also by the philosopher Leon de Bagnols (Ralbag) several decades before. But as the Messiah did not come, many Jews regarded the eminent position of Samuel and other Jewish favorites as vestiges of the sceptre of Judah. It was a delusion that had a serious aspect too. A rabbinic authority, R. Nissim Gerundi ben Reuben (Ran; flourished about 1340-80), rabbi of Barcelona and Talmudic commentator, preached against such calculations of the year of the Messianic redemption based upon the Book of Daniel. He feared, and justly so, that the many calculations that proved fallacious would shake the belief in the coming of the Messiah altogether.

The Messianic significance attached to Samuel's eminent position also proved fallacious. Samuel exerted too great an influence upon the king to avoid making enemies. Even if he were a Christian the courtiers would have formed conspiracies for his undoing, and especially so since he was a Jew. Not only Don Pedro's illegitimate brother Henry and Queen Blanca, but also such as had formerly been in the king's service sought to incite the Castilian population against the Jews and particularly against the Jewish minister. Don Pedro Lopez de Ayala, poet chronicler and the king's standard-bearer, expresses in a poem the feelings of the courtiers towards the Jewish favorites: "The Jews drink the blood of the oppressed Christians, and thirst after their possessions by means of tax-farming. Don Abraham and Don Samuel, with honey-sweet lips, obtain from the king whatever they desire." There were many who would fain see Samuel's downfall. Nor were they disappointed. All at once Don Pedro ordered the confiscation of Samuel's entire property and that of his relatives which consisted of 170,900 doubloons, 4000 marks of silver, 125 caskets of gold and silver vessels, 80 slaves, and 60,000 doubloons belonging to his relatives. It was said that in Samuel's house there was found underground an astounding quantity of gold and silver. Don Pedro had his former favorite imprisoned and placed under torture to compel him to reveal the whereabouts of other hidden treasures. Don Samuel, however, remained steadfast and died under torture. (Oct. or Nov., 1360). The inscription on his tombstone tells in simple words of his former greatness and how his soul, purified by the agonies of torture, ascended to God. It contains not a single expression of ill-will against Don Pedro.

The death of Don Samuel produced no change in the friendly relations of the king with the Jews. They remained loyal to him as heretofore, and he conferred distinctions upon several Jews. For this reason they had to share in the hatred of his enemies, and were held responsible for his misdeeds. Don Pedro had his hated wife removed out of the way. Whether the queen was a saint or a schemer, whether she deserved death or not, the manner of her death stains Pedro's character forever. Still, the chronicler de Ayala, with all his aversion to the Jews, does not, by a single syllable, implicate the king's Jewish favorites in this crime. It was only in later times that Jew-hatred invented all sorts of tales in order to charge the Jewish courtiers with this outrage. One story has it that a Jew poisoned Queen Blanca, upon the king's order, because she insisted upon the expulsion of the Jews from the kingdom, and a French romance perpetuated this odious fiction. Don Pedro's illegitimate brother, Don Henry de Trastamara, took advantage of Queen Blanca's death and its consequences to win allies for the dethronement of the legitimate king. The Bourbons of France and the king himself promised their aid, and assisted him in obtaining the services of the so-called "Great" or "White Company," a band of wild adventurers that rendered the French domain insecure after the war with England was over. The pope also supported the bastard because Don Pedro's friendly attitude to the Jews was a thorn in his flesh, and excommunicated the king of Spain without ceremony. To lend an air of legitimacy to his rebellion and to gain a following, Don Henry blackened his brother's character and described him as unworthy of rulership, as a man who had forfeited his throne because he permitted his states to be ruled by Jews, and sympathized with them and their religion. He went so far in calumniating his brother that he spread a rumor that Maria de Padilla, the king's mistress, was a Jewess, and that Don Pedro himself was of Jewish descent.

With the mercenaries of the "White Company," an unscrupulous band, Henry crossed the Pyrenees for the purpose of dethroning his brother. At the head of this English and French riffraff there stood the mightiest warrior of his time, the hero and adventurer Bertrand du Guesclin, famous for his heroic feats, his ugliness and his queer manners, whom legend glorified as it did the Cid. The Jews embraced the cause of Don Pedro on this occasion, too, and supported him not alone with their money, but also with their lives. They joined the ranks of his warriors, or defended the cities against the attacks of Don Henry and du Guesclin. But Henry proved victorious. The savage mercenaries slew the Jewish combatants as well as the unarmed. Nearly the entire country fell into the hands of the victor, because Don Pedro failed to concentrate his loyal supporters or to bribe the savage adventurers as he had been advised to do. He sadly missed Don Samuel with his sagacity. The gates of Toledo, the capital, were opened to the victor, although Don Pedro's party of which the Jews formed a part, had voted for resistance for a long time. Don Henry imposed a heavy fine upon the Toledo community as a penalty for its loyalty to the legitimate king. Seville was the only refuge left for Don Pedro.

Fortune smiled upon Don Pedro once more when, as a fugitive, he was compelled to cross the Pyrenees and leave his entire country in the hands of the victor. The heroic Prince of Wales, called the Black Prince for his iron armor, who was then in Southern France, undertook to help the dethroned king in the name of legitimacy and with a view at a rich reward of money and land. Henry de Trastamara had to leave Spain again (1367), and all Spain again acclaimed the victorious Don Pedro. But the wheel of fortune soon turned once more.

The Black Prince left Don Pedro in the lurch, and Don Henry, with new troops from France, returned once more. The cities of Northern Spain submitted to him again. The people of Bourgos opened the gate to the victor; the Jews alone remained loyal to Don Pedro. Supported by several knights, Don Pedro's partisans, they defended the Jewish quarter of Burgos, and fought valiantly, and yielded only to superior numbers. Henry permitted them to remain in the city undisturbed; they were only required to pay a million maravedis ($3,400,000). The Christians desired to take immediate advantage of the victory over Don Pedro. The Cortes of Bourgos requested Henry to issue a law to exclude Jews henceforth from any office, even from that of court physician, and from tax-farming. Henry replied that the exclusion of Jews from all offices was something that no Castilian king had ever done, but he promised that he would not consult the Jews of his court, and would confer upon them no power that might redound to the disadvantage of the country. It is possible that Don Henry did not wish to drive the Jews to despair since Don Pedro still had many adherents. Most of the Jewish communities remained loyal to him, and in the army, too, Jews fought valiantly for the king who had treated them justly to the end. Even in his desperate position when he was driven to call upon the Mohammedan King of Granada for help, he urged upon his ally to spare the Jews. The Jews, however, suffered at the hands of both friend and enemy, for Don Pedro's allies, the English first and the Mohammedans later, committed all sorts of violence behind his back. The communities of Villadiego and Aguilar were completely annihilated by the English. Don Pedro's Mohammedan ally led three hundred Jewish families of Jaen captive to Granada. The Jews fared still worse at the hands of du Guesclin who never looked upon them as partisans and combatants, but as slaves who had dared take up arms against their master.

The community of Toledo suffered most of all. They vied with Don Pedro's Christian adherents in making the greatest sacrifice to defend the city against the enemy, and endured a long and horrible siege in the course of which the food supply gave out, and the besieged were compelled to eat not only the parchment of the holy scrolls, but the flesh of their own children. The majority of the Toledo community succumbed to the ravages of the war and the famine. Don Henry finally conquered his brother at Montiel (March 14, 1369), and Don Pedro met with a tragic end. It is said that when Henry met his brother he hurled at him the insulting remark: "Where is this Jew, the son of a harlot, who styles himself the king of Castile?" Thereupon the two brothers engaged in a desperate combat until Don Pedro succumbed, and was beheaded by his brother and du Guesclin. Pope Urban V could not restrain his joy upon hearing of Don Pedro's death. "The Church must rejoice," he said, "at the death of such a tyrant, a rebel against the Church, and a friend of Jews and Saracens. Let the righteous rejoice for he beheld vengeance." What the papacy long failed to accomplish, the humiliation of the Spanish Jews, was accomplished unexpectedly by the brother-war in Castile. The Jews, too, sustained a defeat at Montiel that was prophetic of misfortune to come.

The prince whom the Jews of Castile, under the banner of civic loyalty, had resisted so much, against whom they had fought with armed hands, the armed bastard, Don Henry of Trastamara, the fratricide, grasped the sceptre in his blood-stained hand after his victory at Montiel, and placed the stolen crown of Castile upon his own guilty head.

A large portion of the numerous Jewish population perished in the course of the long civil war, either on the battlefield, in the famine of the besieged cities or by the hands of the robber bands of the White Company. The largest Jewish community of Castile, Toledo, the Jerusalem of the West, did not count as many hundreds after the siege was raised as it formerly did thousands. The rest of the Jews of Castile were reduced to beggary as a result of the plunder and extortion of both friend and foe. A contemporary (Samuel Carca) affectingly describes the hapless condition of the Castilian communities of that time: "In truth, plunder succeeded plunder, the penny disappeared from the purse, the soul from the body; all the travail of the Messianic period came to pass, but the redeemer did not come." However, while the surviving Jews had sufficient cause to tremble for their fate that was now in the hands of the man whom they had so bitterly antagonized, Don Henry treated them with greater consideration than they expected. The Jews were as indispensable to Don Henry II as to his predecessors and to the French and German princes. The Jewish financiers alone were capable of regulating the budget; and Don Henry needed them more than ever because he had incurred extraordinary debts in the course of the war that had to be met. The country was impoverished as a result of the prolonged wars. Who was to attend to the necessary funds and see to the regular collection of the various revenues if not the Jews? Instead of punishing the vanquished, he expressed appreciation of their sense of loyalty that prompted them to cling to the fallen king to the end and not to forsake him for the victor. As a result of these considerations, Don Henry proved guilty of the same offense for which he had stigmatized his brother in the eyes of Christendom: he, too, employed able Jews in the service of the state. Two Jews of Seville, Don Joseph Pichon and Don Samuel Abrabanel, he entrusted with important offices. Don Joseph was the receiver-general of taxes and the king's Almoxarif (treasurer), and stood high in his regard.

However, while the king bore no malice against the Jews for their former hostility toward him, the people did not forget it. The nobles and the burghers could not forgive them for having forced them as enemies in the besieged cities and on the battlefield, and the feeling of revenge and Jew-hatred made them blind to the benefits of the state derived from the Jews. The latter were the vanquished, and must, therefore, be reduced to a sort of servitude. This hostility of the Christian population to the Jews found expression at once upon the convocation of the first Cortes at Toro (1371), that demanded that the Jews be barred from all the Jewish badge, be prohibited from appearing in public clad in rich garments, from riding a mule, and from bearing Christian names. Don Henry was rather displeased at these demands, but he could not help making some concessions to them. He imposed only two restrictions upon the Jews: that they bear the badge and discard their Castilian names; but these restrictions, though immaterial in character, had a disastrous effect upon them. Their Spanish pride which they shared with the grandees and hidalgos was deeply offended thereby. For a century and a half the Castilian Jews were the only ones who succeeded in evading the canonical law demanding that Jews wear a badge of disgrace; and now they, too, were to wear this stigma on their garments. They who were accustomed to lift their heads proudly and bear sonorous names were henceforth to slink along with dejected looks and bear only Oriental names. This humiliation was more than they could bear, it crushed their spirit. Besides, the unfortunate war with its consequences had blunted their intellect and forced them to concentrate their attention upon material necessities to the exclusion of spiritual pursuits. Intellectual deterioration ensued in Spain too. Their indifference to scientific pursuits produced such a striking ignorance in Jewish Spain that "things that were formerly of common knowledge were forgotten in Israel." And it was just at this time that men of spirit and knowledge, men who could stand in the breach, were absolutely indispensable; for the representatives of the Church had just then begun to make energetic attacks upon Judaism in order to lead its adherents into apostasy.

Don Henry was much indebted to the Church that had sanctified his robbery of a crown, and moved either by gratitude or by hypocrisy, he made concessions to the clergy. At their request and upon his command, the Jews had to submit again to the unwelcome religious disputations at which they had much to lose and little to gain, because freedom of discussion was not evenly divided. Two Jewish apostates received authority from the king to arrange for religious disputations in every province or city of Castile, at their pleasure, and to compel Jews to be present and participate in these affairs. In Avila the entire community had to present itself in the great church (1375) to listen to such a disputation. The Jews were represented by the physician, Moses Cohen de Tordesillas, who was familiar with the Christian religious sources. Moses entered upon this dangerous task with misgivings in his heart because he knew from personal experience what Christian love meant; during the civil war the Christian bands had robbed him of all his property and maltreated him physically in order to force him to accept Christianity.

The disputation, however, proved an easy matter for Moses de Tordesillas. As the apostate Johannes of Valladolid sought to prove the truths of Christian dogmas by Old Testament references, his Jewish opponent could easily disprove his arguments. After four disputations Johannes acknowledged his defeat. But the end was not yet. Another sophist challenged Moses to a disputation about the Talmud, threatening him, in case of refusal, with bringing formal charges against the Talmud as a book that contains blasphemies against Christianity. De Tordesillas had once more to defend his position against stupid assertions and attacks; but he preserved his equanimity throughout, difficult as it was, and no insulting remark escaped him. In the summary of the disputation which he wrote for the community of Toledo (Ezer ha-Emunah), he exhorts his coreligionists not to permit themselves to be carried away by their zeal to the point of giving expression to insulting words, for the Christians "possess the power and are in a position to silence the truth by the fist of violence."

As though they apprehended that their Spanish brethren were on the threshold of severe trials, a few far-sighted Jews provided their coreligionists with a shield and helmet against the time of the approaching struggle that they might not be surprised unarmed by the inexorable foe. Contemporaneously with Moses de Tordesillas, another Spanish Jew, Shem-Tob ben Isaac Shaprut of Tudela, wrote another polemic against Christianity. Cardinal Don Pedro de Luna who, later, as Pope Benedict XIII, had brought so much confusion in the Church and so many evils upon the Jews, was possessed by missionary zeal, and by an extreme fondness for arguing religious questions. In Pampeluna he challenged Shem-Tob Shaprut to a disputation on original sin and salvation, and the latter was compelled to argue these questions in the presence of bishops and learned priests. To enable the Jews to provide themselves with weapons from the Christian arsenal, he translated into Hebrew extracts from the four gospels with critical notes of his own.

These polemics, however, did not produce the desired effect in the period of trial. There was, indeed, no lack of literature, but there was a scarcity of energetic men and imposing leaders in Jewish Spain, who, by their strength of will and attitude, could raise the half-educated, if not the masses, to their own level and impart to them a portion of their own spirit. The interdict placed upon science by anxious scrupulosity and excessive piety avenged itself most keenly; it produced a race of dwarfs that lacked the insight into circumstances which only the scientifically trained mind could supply. Even religious loyalty suffered as a consequence of this obscurantism. Most of the Spanish rabbis of this period were either outspoken enemies of science, and particularly of religious philosophy, or were indifferent to them. Only laymen pursued these studies, but they were not profound and original thinkers.

Only two men, Hasdai Crescas and Isaac ben Sheshet, rose above the mediocrity of their time by their character and knowledge, and they belonged not to Castile, but to the kingdom of Aragon, where the Jews, under Don Pedro IV and Juan I, were neither so impoverished nor so humiliated as their brethren of Castile. It is true that Crescas and Ben Sheshet were not so great as to impress their personalities and their tendencies upon their contemporaries; but they were significant enough to form the focus of larger circles and were not infrequently called upon to give the final decision in complex situations. Both were bent upon the preservation and promotion of Judaism, upon the establishment of peace in the near and distant communities, and upon raising the drooping spirits as much as was possible with their limited means and under the unfavorable conditions of their time.

Hasdai ben Abraham Crescas (about 1340-1410), who lived first in Barcelona and then in Saragossa, though a man of Talmudic learning, was not a rabbi; his wealth and his occupations left him no leisure for that honorable office. He stood close to the Aragonian court, under Juan I, was frequently consulted on important affairs of state, and was on terms of intimacy with the Aragonian grandees. Thoroughly familiar with the teachings of the various schools of philosophy, he mastered them with an independence and a depth that stamped him as an original thinker. As a matter of course, religion or Judaism was the fundamental basis of his ideas, but he presented it in an original form. Hasdai Crescas was the first to recognize deeply the weakness of the prevailing philosophy of Aristotle, whom most Jewish thinkers acknowledged as an absolute authority, and he dealt mighty blows at the Aristotelian system. Hasdai Crescas was of mild and tender nature, a friend in need, and a staunch defender of the weak. He labored with all his powers to alleviate the misery that befell the Jews of Spain in his days.

Resembling him in character, but radically differing from him in thought, was his older friend, Isaac ben Sheshet (about 1336-1408), who may be regarded as a disciple of Ibn Adret, since he received his training under the former's son and immediate disciples. Just as he acquired Ibn Adret's lucidity in the conception and the treatment of the Talmud, so he imbibed his hostility to science, and even surpassed him in this respect. The former was impelled by the exigencies of his time to interdict science only to immature youth; the latter shared the views of the Asherides, that even mature men must hold aloof from it. Natural sciences and philosophy must be avoided because they undermine the foundation of the Torah. In other respects Ben Sheshet was a man of a lofty moral character and of a kindly nature and was always ready to sacrifice his personal interest for the general welfare; but when a violation of a Talmudic law or custom was concerned his kindliness gave way to excessive severity.

Characteristic of Isaac ben Sheshet is his quarrel with Hayyim Galipapa, a rabbi already advanced in years, whose views were diametrically opposed to those of Ben Sheshet. Hayyim Galipapa (about 1310-1380), rabbi of Huesca and Pampeluna, is a unique phenomenon in the Middle Ages. While the majority of the rabbis of that time, particularly since the days of Asheri, yielded to the propensity of interpreting the law in its most rigorous sense, and, in doubtful cases, to turn the scale towards the side of severity, Galipapa held the opposite view, that it was the duty of the rabbis to search for some Talmudic basis that would justify the alleviation of conditions. The present, he maintained, was more favorable than the past, since the ignorance of the masses was no longer so glaring as it was in former times, and there is no longer any ground for the fear that mitigation might lead to the violation of important religious laws. Galipapa reduced his principles to practice in minor points, of course; but in those days importance was attached to such trifles too. In other respects also did Galipapa hold independent views that deviated from those commonly accepted. He held, for instance, that the mysterious Book of Daniel was not a prophecy, but a reflex of the Maccabean struggle. This man, venerable both for his learning and for his advanced age, was sharply rebuked by Ben Sheshet, who admonished him to avoid dissensions and to create no opportunity for a schism in Judaism. Galipapa's modest attempts at reform had no further results.

The authority of Hasdai and Isaac ben Sheshet was recognized in France, too; and these two were appealed to to give the final decision in the controversy over the chief-rabbinate of the French communities. The Jewish situation in France underwent changes that were partly due to political conditions. Manassier de Vesou, the protector of his coreligionists and the chief-rabbi, Matathias, both of whom had enjoyed the respect of the communities and the favor of the court, were dead, and their sons inherited their respective positions of authority. Solomon de Vesou became receiver-general of taxes, and Johanan Provenci succeeded his father in the rabbinate and was confirmed by the king. After he had served in that capacity for five years, there came into France from Savoy a former disciple of his father's, Isaiah Astruc ben Abba Mari, and brought with him an authorization from Meir Halevi of Vienna, the chief-rabbi of Germany, that invested him with sole authority to ordain scholars as rabbis. Whoever was to exercise rabbinical functions, particularly in matters of marriage and divorce, without his permission, was excommunicated, and his acts with reference to marital laws were to be null and void. By virtue of his supreme authority he deposed Johanan because the latter refused to submit to him. As the family of de Vesou had lost its influence, Johanan received but little support. There were, however, several men who were dissatisfied with the high-handed action of the newcomer and complained particularly of the presumption of Rabbi

Meir Halevi in prescribing laws for foreign communities. As a result there ensued an excitement in the French communities that was still further heightened by the circumstance that Isaiah distributed the various rabbinical offices among his own relatives. Johanan appealed to the chief representatives of Spanish Jewry, Hasdai Crescas and Isaac ben Sheshet. The two "great men of Catalonia" (as they were styled) decided in favor of Johanan. If this decision proved of any advantage to Johanan, he did not long enjoy his authority for the days of the Jews of France were numbered.

The storm that originated in Spain this time shook to its very pith the ancient trunk that had struck deep roots in this country, and it required a century of repeated, mighty blows to uproot it completely. In France, on the other hand, a mere breath of wind sufficed to blow away loose shoots that at best grew only in quicksand. The Spanish Jews were themselves partly to blame for the bloody drama, the first act of which was staged at the end of the fourteenth century, and upon which the final curtain did not fall till the end of the following century. When their enemies complained that the Jews forced themselves upon the court and the grandees, that they accumulated wealth by usury, and that they rustled in silken garments, these charges were true only of the Jewish aristocrats, but all Jewry had to suffer for the folly and the presumption of the few. Isaac ben Sheshet himself complains: "The Jewish princes, nobles and men of wealth are themselves to blame for this evil; they regard only their own honor and wealth, but have no regard for the glory of their God." The moralist, Solomon Alami, thus describes the degeneracy of the rich in his "Letter of Correction" (Iggeret ha-Musar, 1413): "The majority of eminent Jews who are associated with the royal courts, to whom the keys of the treasures of the State are entrusted, are proud of their eminence and their wealth and have no regard for the poor. They build themselves palaces, ride in stately carriages, and adorn their wives and daughters like princesses with gold, pearls and precious stones. They are indifferent to their religion, despise modesty, hate work and are slaves of idleness. They are fond of the dance and play, dress in the national costume and walk about with smoothed beards. They themselves feed on dainties, while the students of the Talmud starve on bread and water. The rabbis are held in contempt, since all classes teach their sons the meanest trades rather than to rear them in knowledge of the Law. During the sermon the leading members of the congregation indulge in sweet slumbers or chatter with one another. In every city they engage in strife one with the other and create dissensions on account of petty things. . . . . Still worse is the envy and the jealousy one entertains towards the other; they caluminate one another before kings and princes."

As a matter of fact, denunciations, hitherto rare among Jews, were of frequent occurrence, and even rabbis were not spared. The latter, who, with a few assessors, constituted criminal courts also, proceeded with severity against informers and traitors and imposed the death penalty upon them. The rabbis of Castile, Aragon, Valencia and Catalonia enjoyed the right of independent criminal jurisdiction from time immemorial. The Jewish tribunal, it is true, could not carry a death penalty into execution without the special sanction of the king, signed with the royal signature; but such authorization could be obtained in an emergency either through the influence of Jewish courtiers or through money. As the rabbis dealt summarily with such informers, and condemned them to death without thorough investigations and examination of witnesses, they augmented the evil instead of curing it, because such a hasty procedure tended to embitter the relatives and friends of the condemned. Moreover, some utterances were treated as treasonable denunciations that did not at all bear such a character. The reckless procedure of a rabbinical tribunal in Burgos against an alleged denunciation on the part of an eminent and popular man proved the occasion, if not the cause, for the first extensive, bloody persecution of Jews of Spain that ultimately led to the expulsion of the Jews from the peninsula.

Joseph Pichon of Seville who stood in high favor with Don Henry II of Castile and was his farmer-general of taxes, was charged with embezzlement by some jealous Jewish courtiers, was arrested by the king, condemned to pay a fine of forty thousand doubloons and was dismissed. Later on the king restored him to favor, and he was exceedingly beloved by the Christian population of Seville. Either to avenge or vindicate himself, Joseph Pichon involved his enemies in a serious charge. Meanwhile Don Henry died, and his son, Don Juan I, was crowned in Burgos, the capital of Old Castile (1379). During the festivities connected with the coronation, a rabbinical tribunal condemned Joseph Pichon to death as an informer and traitor without giving him a hearing. Several Jews who had access to court obtained from the young king the necessary permission to execute a dangerous criminal in their midst without mentioning his name. Confidants of the king were bribed, it is said, to induce the king to affix his signature to the death warrant. Provided with the king's signature and with the death warrant of the rabbinical tribunal, Pichon's enemies proceeded to the chief of police (Alguacil) Fernan Martin, and obtained his assistance for the execution. Early in the morning (Aug. 21, 1379), several Jews, accompanied by the chief of police, appeared in Pichon's residence in Burgos and awakened him on some pretext. As soon as he appeared at the door, he was seized without a word and beheaded.

The reckless procedure against an eminent man who possibly did not deserve death, even from the point of view of rabbinic law, and who probably was a victim of his enemies' intrigues, excited general indignation. The young king, Don Juan I, was highly incensed at the Jews who had dared, on the very day of his coronation, execute a man who had rendered his father essential services, and had tricked him into giving his sanction to such an outrage. He ordered the death of the Jews who had participated in Pichon's execution, including one of the rabbi-judges of Burgos. Fernan Martin had his hand cut off by the king's order for his part in the affair. This incident led to further consequences. In the first place, the king deprived the Jewish courts of criminal jurisdiction; Jews were henceforth to select Christian judges to try criminal cases. In addition, the king in his anger gave credence to various charges against the Jews, particularly that they were calling down execrations upon the Church and the Christians in their prayers, and that they were accepting proselytes from the Mohammedans, Tartars, and from other peoples. Both were interdicted on pain of severe punishment.

The Castilian population too was embittered against the Jews in general for the apparently unjust execution of Joseph Pichon, in which not private individuals but the leaders and rabbis participated. The Christians of Seville who had loved Joseph Pichon were so enraged at his unjust execution that they were only awaiting an opportunity to avenge his death upon the Jews.

Charges against the Jews, and attempts to restrict their rights were henceforth of common occurrence in the sessions of the Cortes, just as they used to be in the Councils under the Visigothic kings. Don Juan, in his anger at the Jews, sanctioned every anti-Jewish enactment of the Cortes in so far as such restriction was not obnioxious to the royal finances. In the Cortes of Valladolid (1385) the king gave his approval to the attempt of the clergy to reintroduce the canonical laws, and issued a decree that the Jews must no longer live together with Christians, and that Christian nurses must not nurse a Jewish child; violaters of these laws were to be whipped in public. Upon motion of the Cortes, the king sanctioned the law that no Jew (or Mohammedan) be henceforth permitted to serve as treasurer either to the king, queen or crown princes—a preposterous law, because it was either superfluous or impractical.

This king who cannot be regarded as an enemy of the Jews met with the strange experience of losing the Portuguese crown as a result of a quarrel over the chief-rabbinate of Spain. King Fernand of Portugal had agreed to designate Don Juan, or rather the latter's second wife, the Portuguese Infanta Beatrice (Brites) his successor upon failure of male issue. The Jews of Portugal under Fernand (1637-83) occupied an unusually fortunate position, as they generally did in that country up to the time of the expulsion. The organization of the Jewish community was an exceedingly favorable one—more so than in any other European country. At the head of Portuguese Jewry there stood a chief-rabbi (Ar-Rabbi Mor) who enjoyed almost princely authority, and who was appointed by the king because of the importance of his office. He had a seal of his own, exercised the higher judicial functions, and issued orders under his signature with the additional formula: "Ar-Rabbi Mor, by the grace of my lord, the king, of the communities of Portugal and Algarve." It was his duty to visit all the communities annually, to investigate their affairs, to listen to the complaints of individuals who suffered any wrongs even at the hands of the rabbis, and to remedy abuses wherever found. On his travels he was accompanied by a chief judge (Ouvidor), a chancellor with his assistants, a secretary (Escrivao) and a bailiff (Porteiro jurado) to enforce his decisions. Under the chief-rabbi or Rabbi Mor there were seven provincial rabbis (Ouvidores), in the seven provinces. These rabbis were appointed by the chief-rabbi; and they supervised the provincial communities, and acted as judges of appeals. The local rabbis were elected by the members of their respective communities, but their election was not legal unless it was confirmed by a commission issued by the chief-rabbi in the name of the king. The rabbis enjoyed both civil and criminal jurisdiction, and they retained this authority longer than their Spanish colleagues. Public documents had to be written in the vernacular.

King Fernand of Portugal had two Jewish favorites who administered his finances. Don Judah, his treasurer-in-chief (Tesoreiro mor), and Don David Negro, his confidant and adviser. When this fickle and spendthrift king died, and Queen Leonora, irresistible because of her charms, hated for her double infidelity and feared for her vindictiveness and dissimulations, entered upon the regency, the representatives of the city of Lisbon urged upon her the abolition of many unpopular measures introduced by the late king, as well as the removal of Jewish and Mohammedan officials. The shrewd Leonora complied with this request, but she kept Don Judah near her person because he was of service to her by virtue of his wealth and experience. But Leonora's scheme to seize the reins of power in her own hands and to share the government with her paramour was frustrated by the still shrewder Don Joao de Avis, the illegitimate Infant, who succeeded in compelling the regent to leave the capital. The vindictive Leonora called upon her son-in-law, King Don Juan of Castile, to take possession of his wife's throne in accordance with Don Fernand's wishes, and a bloody civil war ensued. The aristocracy sided with the regent, the common people enthusiastically embraced the cause of Don Joao de Avis. Pursued by the hatred of the people, Leonora had to seek refuge in Santarem; the two Jewish aristocrats Judah and David Negro who left Lisbon in disguise were in the queen's retinue. There Leonora was joined by King Juan of Castile in whose favor she resigned the regency in order to avenge herself on her enemies, and at whose disposal she placed her adherents, the entire Portuguese court, as well as many fortresses. For the success of the king's plan to unite Portugal with Castile perfect harmony between Don Juan and Leonora was absolutely essential. This harmony, however, was disturbed as a result of the appointment of a chief-rabbi, and was transformed into bitter enmity.

When the chief-rabbinate of Castile became vacant (1384), the dowager-queen Leonora desired the appointment of her favorite Judah to that office, and interceded in his behalf with king Juan, her son-in-law and confederate. Don Juan, however, had promised the appointment to David Negro at the request of his wife Beatrice. Leonora resented the king's refusal most bitterly, advised her followers to make common cause with Don Joao de Avis, and even went so far as to form a conspiracy against the life of King Juan in which her favorite Judah was involved. But the appointed chief-rabbi, David Negro, frustrated the conspiracy and saved the king's life. Don Juan had Leonora imprisoned. Judah also was seized and condemned to death, but was saved by the intercession of his rival David Negro. As a result of the discord between Don Juan and Leonora and of the latter's imprisonment, the former lost the support of the queen's followers, met with resistance on all sides, and was finally compelled to abandon his ambition of uniting Portugal with Castile into one kingdom.

Although several rabbis yielded to vanity, ambition or other unworthy motives to enter rivalry for rabbinical offices, as was the case with David Negro and Judah in Castile, Isaiah ben Abba-Mari and Johanan in France, and several others, such occurrences were the rare exception. The majority of rabbis regarded their office as a sacred priesthood to be served with clean hands, pure hearts and unselfish endeavor. They excelled their communities not alone in learning and piety, but also in nobility of character, conscientiousness and moral purity. Even those ambitious rabbis were guilty only of office hunting and contentiousness, and it were an insult to their memory even to compare them with the servants of the Church. For Christianity was at no time more disgraced by its representatives than in the fourteenth and in the following century. Ever since the papacy established its seat at Avignon, it became a veritable cesspool of wickedness and corruption that infected the entire clergy to the humblest servant. This condition was rendered still worse by the passionate quarrel of one pope with another, one college of cardinals with another that split Christianity into two camps.

Such degenerate priests regarded themselves, nevertheless, defiled by contact with Jews, and brought about scenes of horror and Jewish massacres. In Prague under Emperor Wenzel, many thousands of Jews were murdered, their dead bodies insulted, their synagogs burned, and their sacred books tramped under foot as a result of the instigations of a priest (1389). Two years later, the religious zeal of a priest of Seville filled a large part of Spain with the blood of murdered Jews. The name of this execrable priest who was really the father of that monstrosity, the inquisition, was Ferran Martinez, archdeacon and vicar of Seville. The main object of his sermons was to incite the populace against the Jews, and to denounce the latter for their stubborn unbelief, their pride and their wealth. In Seville he found too ready an audience, for the Jews of that city were generally hated on account of their active participation in the war between Don Pedro and Don Henry II, and on account of the suspicious circumstances that surrounded the execution of Joseph Pichon who was very popular among the Christians.

One day (March 15, 1391), a memorable day not alone for the Jews and not alone for Spain, Martinez incited the crowd against the Jews, and the populace made ready to attack them. The authorities of the city, however, the chief of police (Alguacil mayor) and two judges, hastened to the defense of the Jews, and seized and flogged two of the ringleaders. But this procedure aroused the fury of the fanatic mob that, thereupon, killed many Jews and threatened even the chief of police with death. Several prominent Jews hastened to the court of the young King Henrique III, and urged upon the council of the regency to put a stop to the massacre of Jews. Upon the king's command, the nobles took up the defence of the Jews, and quiet was momentarily restored.

But Jew-baiting broke out afresh with greater violence and over a wider range. Martinez had received full license to direct his poisonous tongue against the Jews. Relying upon the discord in the government circles and upon the turbulence of the country consequent upon it, he again incited the crowd against the Jews of Seville, and this time with greater success. Hardly three months after the first massacre, the Jewish quarter was set on fire and the holy work of murder began without the least scruple. Of the large Seville community that contained about seven thousand families, about twenty or thirty thousand souls, only a few were left. Four thousand of them were killed; the majority, seized by the fear of death, submitted to baptism. Women and children were sold to Mohammedans as slaves. Two of the Seville synagogs were converted into churches. Like a devouring flame, the lust of murder, inspired by rapacity, spread from Seville over a large portion of Spain. The mother community of Jewish Spain, Cordova, was the first victim. Jewish blood flowed in the streets of that city, and many Jews were forced to accept Christianity. Among the many martyrs of Toledo, the descendants of Asheri met their death with the steadfastness of the German Jews. Judah ben Asher II, a great grandson of Asheri's who lived in Burgos but who happened to be in Toledo on the occasion of the massacre, slew his mother-in-law, his wife and then himself. In Toledo, too, a large number embraced Christianity. About seventy communities were visited by the horrible persecution. The fanatic Christians were about to institute a similar massacre among the Moors or Mohammedans who lived in the kingdom of Seville. They desisted, however, when it was pointed out to them that such a step would endanger the lives of Christians who lived in the Mohammedan kingdom of Granada, or were held as captives among the Berbers across the straits. The Jews alone had to drain the bitter cup because they were weak. Nothing could prove more conclusively than this incident how the clergy had made murderers out of the people.

Although the ruler and the people of Aragon usually held aloof from Castile, and held that to be wrong which in the latter state was considered right, the hatred and the persecution of the Jews knew no boundary between the two kingdoms. Hardly three weeks after the massacre in Toledo, the people arose against the Jews in the province of Valencia. In the capital city, Valencia, not one was left out of nearly five thousand souls that constituted the Jewish community. More than two hundred were killed, many embraced Christianity, and only a few escaped by flight. In the entire kingdom of Valencia, the Jewish community of Murviedro was the only one that escaped destruction.

The mania for bloodshed crossed the sea into the island of Mallorca (Majorca). In the capital, Palma, street urchins and sailors assembled in the Montesion (Mount Zion) street occupied by the Jews, carried two sticks tied in the shape of a cross, and shouted: "Death to the Jews." When a sturdy Jew attacked by the savage mob, defended himself, caught one of his assailants in his powerful grip and strangled him, the fury of the mob knew no bounds. Three hundred martyrs fell, the rabbi En Vidal Ephraim Gerundi, among them. Here, too, several Jews saved their lives by the acceptance of baptism. Three days after the massacre of Palma, the slaughter of Jews began in Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia, the home of the Jewish intellectual aristocracy. The great prosperity of the Jews, as a result of their transmarine commerce, incited the Christian population to attack them. On a Sabbath, coincident with the celebration of Marymas (Aug. 5), a raging mob made an onslaught on the Jews as though wishing to worship the Queen of Heaven with human sacrifices. In the first attack more than two hundred Jews perished. The governor promptly received a majority of the community in the castle and provided them with the necessaries of life. The mob, however, resisted the nobles, hurled missiles at the castle, laid siege to it, and finally set it on fire. When the besieged Jews realized that their position was hopeless, many committed suicide outright, others precipitated themselves from the walls, while still others left the castle, gave battle to their assailants and died a heroic death. Among the martyrs there was the young and only son of the noble Hasdai Crescas who came to Barcelona to celebrate his wedding. Eleven thousand Jews, it is said, submitted to baptism on that occasion. Only few escaped, and not a single Jew remained in Barcelona. A similar fate befell the communities of Larida, Gerona and of other cities; some of them were slain, others accepted baptism, and but a few saved themselves by flight. The rabbis set the example to the laymen how to die heroically. In Catalonia, as in Valencia, only few Jews were spared; and these escaped death only by bribing the nobles to give them refuge in their castles. In Aragon proper the number of victims was small because the Jewish communities took the precaution early to offer all their treasures to the court for protection.

The massacres of the Jews continued for three months in many parts of Spain, and even later the survivors were so oppressed by anxiety and uneasiness that they dared not leave their places of refuge. The noble Hasdai Crescas who lost his only son and all his property in the course of the persecutions, describes the tragic events with a broken heart and tearful eyes to the community of

Perpignan that solicited information in fraternal sympathy.

And thus the Spanish Jews, too, experienced the same tragic fate that befell their German coreligionists half a century before at the time of the Black Death. To them, however, the consequences of the persecutions were more shocking than the massacres themselves, for their manly courage was thereby crushed, their eyes dimmed, and their spirit clouded. They, too, the hitherto proud Spanish Jews, had to slink timidly by, and anxiously avoided every Christian because they suspected in him a murderer or one who incited to the murder of the Jews. A mere street urchin could scare a hundred Jews into flight like so many frightened birds. Since these massacres they, too, felt the entire bitterness of the exile, while hitherto, despite some adversities, they felt at home and secure in Spain. They were no longer the same men who had fought so courageously for Don Pedro.

In Portugal alone the Jews escaped the rage of fanaticism. Don Joao I, by virtue of his great popularity, was in a position to maintain order with a firm hand, and to check all excesses. Many Jews who were driven to baptism by the fear of death fled to Portugal and there returned to their ancestral faith. When they were charged with apostasy by the Portuguese clergy, the chief rabbi, Don Moses Navarro placed before the king two bulls issued by Popes Clement VI and Boniface IX to the effect that Jews were not to be driven by force to accept baptism. Thereupon Don Joao issued a decree (July 17, 1392), that no one should dare lay violent hands on the forcibly baptised fugitives. The bulls were published in all the cities of Portugal, and were admitted into the code. As a result, Portugal became a place of refuge for the persecuted Jews of Spain.

But the Jews of Southern France were not spared altogether. As soon as the news of the Spanish massacres reached Provence, its population, too, rose against the Jews, and began the work of plunder and murder. The Jews were admitted into France only for a definite term of years, and though that term was often extended they had ever to bear their possible expulsion in mind, and to acquire as much money as would enable them to find shelter in a different country. Like their forefathers in Egypt, they had ever their loins girded, their staves in their hands, and their bundles tied, ready to wander. Though they were permitted to own landed property, they still had to apply themselves to money transactions for the most part, and to exploit the advantages of the moment. They became usurers by necessity. The king practically forced them to exact extortionate and provoking rates of interest. The fact that the Jews had to resort to the necessity of having their debtors imprisoned to compel them to pay their debts also tended to increase the irritations against them. A slight incident sufficed to fan the smoldering fire into a devouring flame. A rich Jew, Denys Machault, of Villa-Parisis, had embraced Christianity and then disappeared. This disappearance gave rise to various rumors. Some said that the Jews had murdered him, others that they had sent him out of the country to enable him to return to Judaism. The clergy interfered in this affair, the fanaticism of the people was aroused, and the higher court of Paris placed seven prominent Jews under investigation. A commission of priests and jurists applied the torture to the accused and extorted from them the confession that they had advised Denys Machault to forsake Christianity. As abettors in the crime of apostasy they were condemned to death by fire. The parliament of Paris apparently mitigated the sentence; the accused were only to be flogged in three market places of Paris, to remain in prison until Denys Machault's return, and then to be banished from France with the loss of all their property. This affair excited unusual attention and still further enflamed the minds of the people against all the Jews of France. The irresolute king Charles VI and his advisers were importuned more and more urgently by priests and laymen to expel the Jews from France. Within three months' time, the Jewish foes accomplished their purpose, and the desired edict of expulsion was issued by the king (Sept. 17, 1394), perhaps purposely, on the Day of Atonement while the unfortunate Jews were assembled fasting in their synagogs. Inasmuch as the extended term of their stay had not yet expired, the government justified its breach of contract on the specious ground that the Jews had encouraged baptized Jews to renounce their new religion, and had exacted extortionate usury, though, as a matter of fact, Charles had partly sanctioned and partly pardoned the latter offense. The king issued an irrevocable law that no Jews were henceforth to live in any part of France, whether in Languedoil or in Languedoc.

And so, the Jews of France, after a second sojourn of thirty-four years, and ninety years after the first expulsion under Philip the Fair, had again to grasp the wanderer's staff in their hands. Charles, however, treated them more humanely than Philip. He commanded the prevost of Paris and the governors of the provinces to take care that the Jews be injured neither in body nor in property. They were given until November 3rd to collect their debts, and the officials were ordered to bring them safely and without injury across the border. Their departure, however, was delayed till the end of 1394 or the beginning of 1395. Some nobles and cities were not at all satisfied with the expulsion of the Jews. The Count of Foix wished to retain the community of Pamier by all means, and had to be forced by royal officers to expel them. In Toulouse there remained twelve Jewish families and in the neighborhood seven that probably received a special privilege. Jews remained also in those parts of France that did not belong to the French crown directly, in Dauphiny, in Provence proper and Arelat that were fiefs of the German emperor. Even the popes of Avignon tolerated the Jews in their petty ecclesiastical state of Venaissin, in the two cities of Avignon and Carpentras. These communities maintain their existence to the present day. At this time the papacy had little to fear of the enfeebled Jews, and therefore treated them with apparent tolerance.

The exiles from France who could find no asylum in more tolerant countries emigrated mostly to Germany and Italy and but few to Spain, the land that used to receive persecuted Jews with hospitality. Since the massacre of 1391, Spain gradually became a hell for its native Jews, and foreign Jews avoided it. Entire French communities settled in Piedmont, in the cities of Asti, Fossano and Moncalvo where they preserved their ancient synagog ritual. Most of the French exiles experienced the simile of Amos (5:19): "If a man were to flee from a lion and a bear should meet him; and he enter into the house, and lean his hand against the wall, and a serpent should bite him." For persecutions, often brought about by Jewish apostates, overtook them nearly everywhere they sought refuge.

THE EPOCH OF MARANOISM

CHAPTER I

THE EFFECTS OF THE PERSECUTION OF 1391; MARANOS AND APOSTATES

(1391-1420)

The Neophytes proved a thorn in the flesh of Spanish Jews. Many thousands of Jews submitted to baptism in the course of the horrible persecutions of 1391, to save their lives or the lives of their dear ones. Could the clenched fists, the rolling eyes, the gory swords, murderers' yells of rage, and the death rattle of their own slain kinsmen, friends and coreligionists have convinced them of the truth of the religion of Christ? Most of the forcibly baptized Jews (Anusim) conceived after their baptism, a still greater aversion to Christianity, and a still more ardent love for the faith of their fathers. Many of the Neo-Christians emigrated to the nearby Moorish countries, to Granada, Morocco, Algiers, and Fez, where at this time greater tolerance and benevolence prevailed than in the Christian countries, and where the Jews with their money or industrial application, were heartily welcomed. The majority, who could not part from Spanish soil, and who would not deny their ancestral faith either, observed their Jewish rites as heretofore. The kings of Castile, Aragon and Mallorca who disapproved of forcible conversion connived at this relapse into Judaism, and the authorities followed their example. The inquisition was not yet established in Spain. These forcibly baptized Jews who remained in Spain formed a separate class, outwardly Christian, inwardly Jewish that may be described as Jewish-Christians. The Christian population, however, regarded them with such mistrust, nicknamed them *maranos,** or the *damned,* and hated them even more violently than they did the Jews who remained loyal to their faith.

These baptized Jews who embraced Christianity for selfish purposes, worldly-minded men who valued comfort, wealth and honor above all religion, or would-be philosophers who had fallen into skepticism and who preferred a religion that led beyond the narrow confines of Judaism and that opened a wide world to them—these converts also conceived an aversion to Judaism. This class that had long since been estranged from Judaism but was kept from renouncing it by weakness or shame welcomed the forcible conversion because it offered them an opportunity to violate their religion without scruples. They made a show of cringing to Christianity, and feigned an exaggerated piety; but became neither better nor more religious in consequence. The conscienceless among these Neo-Christians found a peculiar charm in despising their former faith and former coreligionists. To avenge themselves on certain rabbis, communal leaders or individual members of a community they turned informers, and more than once endangered the existence of Spanish Jewry. Familiar with the weak points of Judaism and Jewry, they could easily direct attacks against them, and ridicule or arraign them in prose and verse. A neophyte, Don Pero Ferrus, selected the community and the rabbi of Alcala as the target of his ridicule. Spanish poetry, hitherto serious, stiff and solemn, received versatility, wit and humor at the hands of the Jewish-Christian satirists; and Christian poets soon learned to imitate them. As the monk Diego de Valencia, a converted Jew, inserted Hebrew words in his satires in order to ridicule the Jews, the Christian satirist, Alfonso Alvarez de Villasandino, then called "the prince of poets," similarly ridiculed Jewish characteristics with surprising cleverness. These satires added insult to injury.

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* Marano, derived from Maranatha, signifies in Spanish, excommunicated, accursed, damned. G.

Some neophytes were even possessed by a zeal for proselytizing, as though they were born Dominicans, or as though they felt isolated in their new faith among the born Christians and were seeking the society of their former friends. A newly-converted physician, Astruc Raimuch, of Fraga, who assumed the name of Francisco Dioscarne and who, as a Jew, had been a pillar of orthodoxy, sought to make proselytes for his new faith. A skilled hebrew stylist, Astruc Francisco, addressed a letter in Hebrew to a young Jewish friend, in which he belittled Judaism and endeavored to prove the dogmas of Christianity by the application of Biblical verses to the trinity, original sin, salvation and the eucharist. His friend replied evasively and in mild terms, Jews had to be careful in responding to attacks of this nature not to offend the sensitive Church and its zealous servants. The satiric poet, Solomon ben Reuben Bonfed evinced greater courage; he answered Astruc Francisco in elegant rimed-prose, and in no complimentary terms. His interference in an affair between friends he excuses on the ground that such controversies concern all Jews. With reference to the dogma of Christianity he makes the correct observation: "You pervert and misinterpret biblical verses in order to establish the trinity. If you had a quaternity you would be able to prove it, too, from the Old Testament just as strikingly and convincingly."

None of the apostates, however, caused his former coreligionists so much suffering as did Rabbi Solomon Levi of Burgos who, after his conversion, assumed the name of Paul Burgensis de Santa Maria (b. about 1351-52, d. 1435). Before his conversion he was really a rabbi, that is, he was familiar with the Bible, the Talmud and rabbinic literature, and was regarded as a pillar of Judaism in rabbinic circles. But he was also unusually shrewd and scheming, and knew when to speak and when to keep silent. Possessed of ambition and vanity, the academy wherein he studied and taught became too narrow and oppressive for him. He longed for an active public life, labored to obtain some foothold at court, to achieve some office, began to cater to the nobles, led a life of luxury, and succeeded in gaining an office at court. Coming in daily contact with Christians, and discussing religious questions with them, he began to familiarize himself with the literature of the Church in order to display his learning. However, as the bloody massacres of 1391 had destroyed all his prospects of advancement as a Jew, he decided in his fortieth year, to embrace Christianity. To make capital out of his conversion, Paul de Santa Maria pretended that he was led to this step by sheer conviction. His brother and his four sisters also accepted baptism.

As there was then only one road to preferment open to civilians, the one leading through the Church, Paul Burgensis selected that. He applied himself to the study of Christian theology in the

University of Paris, distinguished himself because he had the advantage of possessing a knowledge of Hebrew, and the rabbi soon became an ordained Catholic priest. From Paris he proceeded to the papal court at Avignon where the arrogant, stubborn and proselytizing cardinal Pedro de Luna was elected as anti-pope under the name of Benedict XIII (Sept. 28, 1394), and where there were many favorable opportunities for intrigues and preferment in the course of the ecclesiastical dissensions between the two popes. Paul made a good impression upon the pope because of his shrewdness, his zeal and his eloquence and appeared to him as a useful tool. Accordingly, he was appointed archdeacon and canon. But Paul cherished the ambition of becoming a bishop and a cardinal, and circumstances favored him. Paul boasted that he was a descendant of the most ancient Jewish aristocracy, of the tribe of Levi, the tribe from which the virgin Mary also sprang; for this reason he styled himself "de Santa Maria." He was hence not an ordinary priest, emanating from the common people, but a descendant of ancestors that must find recognition and distinction in the Church. At the recommendation of the pope, Don Henry III, King of Castile, showered distinctions and honors upon him later on. His ambition was satisfied.

The apostasy of Solomon Burgensis, a formerly respected rabbi, filled the Jews with anxiety for fear that his example would find imitation. Moreover, Paul regarded it as his mission to convert his former coreligionists. He made special efforts to convert even the two noblest men in Spanish Jewry, Joseph Orabuena, physician to Charles III, of Navarre, and chief-rabbi of that country, and Meir Alguades, chief-rabbi of Castile and physician to King Don Henry III. Inasmuch as his efforts at proselytizing failed, he maligned the Jews in order to incite new persecutions. His calumnies were so striking that even the pope-cardinal of Pampeluna and other priests had to silence him. This apostate went so far in his animosity towards the Jews that he advised King Don Henry III to exclude not only Jews but even Neo-Christians from all offices, possibly with the intention of obviating any rivalry on the part of any former coreligionist who was more gifted than he. In his commentary on the Scriptures, Paul de Santa Maria proves himself similarly venomous to Jews and Judaism.

Intelligent Jews justly recognized in this apostate their bitterest enemy, and prepared to give him battle. They had, to be sure, but a limited choice of weapons. The representatives of Christianity possessed not only freedom of speech, but also the fist and the dungeon with which to prove their dogmas and arguments, while the Jews had to be exceedingly circumspect not to give offence, and thereby provoke violence. The courageous opposition of a weak handful to the superior number of a mighty and overweening foe must therefore excite the admiration of all who applaud not victorious might but struggling right.

The attack upon Paul de Santa Maria was opened by Joshua ben Joseph Lorqui, of Canis, a young man who formerly sat at the apostate's feet, a physician and student of Arabic. In a letter written in a tone of humility as befits a disciple who addresses his master, Joshua Lorqui hurls keen shafts of sarcasm at his apostate teacher, and, under the guise of doubt, he shatters the foundations of Christianity. He remarks in the opening lines that the conversion of his beloved teacher had caused him even greater astonishment than it did others and set him thinking. He surely could not believe that ambition and love of splendor had induced him to take this step, nor that he had been beset by religious doubts, since, up to the time of his baptism, he had conscientiously fulfilled all Jewish duties. Moreover, he (Lorqui) is compelled to abandon the thought that the bloody persecutions of the Jews had led Paul to despair of the continuance of the Jewish race, since it must be known to him that only a minority of Jews lived in Christian countries, that the majority of them lived in Asia and enjoyed a certain independence, so that if it pleased God to exterminate the communities that exist in Christian countries, the Jewish race would not thereby vanish from the face of the earth. The only conclusion left to him, Lorqui continues, is the assumption that Paul had given Christianity a thorough examination and had found its dogmas true. He therefore asks him to impart his proofs to his disciple and to allay his doubts as to the truths of Christianity. In the course of his letter, Lorqui adduces many striking arguments against Christianity. Each sentence in this letter contained a sting for the apostate Paul. Paul replied to this letter, but his answer is evasive and written in a tone of evident embarrassment.

The philosopher, Hasdai Crescas, also appeared as a valiant champion for the faith of his fathers. He wrote a treatise on the dogmas of Christianity which he criticises from a philosophic point of view, and the untenableness of which he points out. This work was addressed to Christians rather than to Jews, and was written at the instance of prominent Christians with whom Hasdai Crescas was on intimate terms. In this treatise he analyses the incomprehensibility of the dogmas of original sin, salvation, the trinity, the incarnation, the virgin birth, transubstantiation, and investigates the relation of the New to the Old Testament in a thoroughly dispassionate manner as though he was not at all aware that these were burning questions that might kindle the flames of many a stake.

The most pointed satire ever penned by a Jew in the entire polemic literature between Judaism and Christianity, and one that hurt the sensibilities of the malicious Neo-Christians most deeply was written by Profiat Duran, a gifted neophyte who had returned to Judaism. Duran, with the Jewish name of Isaac ben Moses, and the literary name of Efodi, a man of wide erudition, physician, astronomer and historian, was compelled to feign Christianity in the course of the bloody persecutions of 1391. Simultaneously with him his friend David En-Bonet-Buen-Giorn, embraced Christianity. Both decided afterwards to emigrate to Palestine in order to return to the faith of their fathers. After they had arranged their affairs, Profiat Duran proceeded to a port in Southern France and awaited his friend there. The latter, however, had meantime come under the influence of the apostate, Paul de Santa Maria, and was persuaded by him to remain within the Church. To Profiat, Duran's great astonishment, he received a letter from En Bonet in which the latter spoke in glowing terms of Christianity, urged upon Duran to follow his own example, and expressed great admiration for Paul de Santa Maria! Profiat Duran replied in a missive replete with inimitably fine irony (1400). It is couched in such terms as to give the impression that Profiat Duran agreed with his friend on every point and approved of his conduct. The frequent recurrence of the phrase "Be not like thy fathers" (Al tehi ka-abothecha) in this missive is so misleading that Christians regarded it (under the title Alteca Boteca), as an apology for Christianity. Pretending to acknowledge the falsity of the "faith of the fathers," Profiat Duran

The Maranos

proceeds to lay before his deluded friend everything that common sense, correct deduction, philosophy and the Scriptures could advance against the dogmas of Christianity, apparently, however, not with the object of changing his views, but rather to fortify his Catholic convictions. A portion of this satire is directed against the apostate, Paul de Santa Maria, whose praises En Bonet sang in his letter. "You think he may possibly succeed in becoming pope, but you did not indicate whether he intends to go to Rome or to remain in Avignon"—a sarcastic reference to the ecclesiastical dissensions between the two popes. "You praise him for his efforts to exempt Jewish women and children from wearing the badge. Carry these glad tidings to the women and children. But I have been informed that he preaches evil against the Jews and had to be silenced by the Cardinal of Pampeluna. You think thy teacher Paul will soon occupy a bishopic, or wear a cardinal's hat. Rejoice in such prospects, for then you, too, will achieve honors, and become a priest or a Levite." Only at the conclusion of his letter Profiat Duran discards his tone of irony and earnestly appeals to his former friend not to use the name of his honorable father in his signature for, were his father living, he would have wished to have no son at all rather than an apostate. This missive was to serve as a polemic and was widely circulated, and it produced such a telling effect that the clergy ordered it burned as soon as they recognized its satiric character. At the request of Hasdai Crescas whose children he had formerly instructed, Profiat Duran wrote another polemic against Christianity, not in a satirical tone, but in the deliberate language of historical analysis. Familiar with the New Testament and with the history of the Church, he showed how Christianity had degenerated in the course of time.

Paul de Santa Maria, under the patronage of the anti-pope Benedict XIII, meanwhile rose higher and higher, became bishop of Cartagena, chancellor of Castile and privy-councillor to King Don Henry III. He did not, however, succeed in inducing the king of Castile to turn against the Jews or to remove them from court offices. The king had two Jewish physicians in whom he reposed especial confidence: Don Meir Alguades, an astronomer and student of philosophy whom King Don Henry had appointed chief-rabbi of all Castilian communities, and Don Moses Çarçal who was also a poet and who celebrated in melodious Spanish verse the longed-for birth of an heir to the throne of Castile.

The calm between two raging storms that intervened during the reign of Don Henry favored the production of some literary aftergrowth almost the last of any importance in Spain. Profiat Duran, who in some inexplicable way managed to remain in Spain, or in Perpignan despite his open return to Judaism and to escape the persecution for his ironic treatment of the Christian dogmas—Profiat Duran wrote a commentary on Maimonides' "Guide" and on several of Ibn Ezra's works, a work on mathematics and the calendar, and compiled a history of the extensive persecutions to which the Jews were subjected in the thirteenth century. His best work is his Hebrew grammar (Maaseh Efod, 1403).

Chasdai Crescas, already on the brink of the grave, and broken by the persecutions and by the martyred death of his son, left behind him a work of unusual merit. Crescas was a profound and comprehensive thinker, and his work was intended to illuminate every phase of Judaism, the ideas and laws that constitute the teachings of Judaism, and to show the connection of the particular with the general. This plan proves not only his extraordinary erudition, but also the clearness of his mind. Death seems to have prevented him from carrying this gigantic work into execution, and he wrote only the philosophic portion of his work, or the introduction to it. In this introduction, Crescas throws light, on the one side, upon the essence of religion in general, the existence of God, divine ominiscience, providence, man's freedom of will, the purpose of the universe, and, on the other side, upon the fundamental truths of Judaism, the doctrine of creation, of immortality and of the Messiah. The Aristotelian-medieval philosophy does not impress him so forcibly as it did his predecessors, because his clear mind recognized its weaknesses more deeply than others did. With a bold hand he tore down the props of the gigantic intellectual structure which Maimonides erected for religion on an Aristotilian basis. Familiar with the entire framework of the scholastic philosophy, he assaults it with mighty blows.

While the philosophy of his time appears to him inconsequent, he regards Judaism as established upon an absolutely solid basis, and he sought only to obviate the objections raised by the former against the latter. The postulate of an infinite divine ominiscience leads Hasdai Crescas to the bold assertion that man is not altogether a free agent that, on the contrary, every event follows necessarily from some cause, and every cause up to the first cause inevitably conditions the occurrence of this or that circumstance. The human will does not follow a blind choice, but is determined by the chain of preceding effects and causes. The objection that the doctrine of reward and punishment must fall to the ground if the will be not free, Crescas meets with the statement that reward and punishment are consequent not upon *actions* but upon *inclinations*. Whoever practices the good joyously deserves a reward just as the one who practices evil gladly deserves punishment, though the act in either case is inevitable. The highest good after which man should strive, and the ultimate end of creation is the spiritual perfection of man, or the eternal life in the world to come. This can be acquired only by good deeds that result from a love of God. This is the very essence of religion and especially of Judaism. Hasdai Crescas, who was the first to draw a distinction between religion in general and a particular form of religion like Judaism and Christianity, differed from Maimonides in laying down only eight articles of faith that are characteristic of Judaism. He justly objects to the thirteen articles of Maimonides on the ground that they contain either too much or too little since they do not carefully distinguish between the fundamental truths of all religion and the doctrines peculiar to Judaism.

Another philosophic writer though not an original thinker who flourished in the brief interval between the two bloody persecutions in Spain, was Don Mair Alguades, chief rabbi of Castile. He translated Aristotle's ethics into Hebrew (1405), and thus familiarized the Jews with ideals which they applied to practical life more than the Greeks in whose midst these ideals originated and more than the representatives of the Church who ignored morals in their preoccupation with confession of faith and church doctrines.

The Jewish scholars of Spain were, however, no longer sufficiently familiar with the Arabic language. For this reason, Alguades had to translate the "ethics" from the Latin text. He was led to this work, or assisted in it, by an eminent man of Saragossa, Don Solomon Benveniste ibn Labi (de la Caballeria) whose son, in a period of severe trials, championed the cause of Judaism with the force of intrepid conviction, and some members of whose family deserted Judaism and became its bitter opponents.

For the Jews of Spain entered upon another period of severe tribulations to which weak natures succumbed, and to which their loyalty was not equal. During the lifetime of the young, energetic though sickly king of Castile, Don Henry III, the condition of the Jews was a tolerable one, but as soon as he died (1406), an unfavorable turn in the affairs of the Spanish Jews set in, a presage of misfortunes to come. The heir-apparent Juan II was hardly two years old, and the regency was conducted by the queen-mother Catalina (Catharina), of Lancaster, a capricious, haughty and fanatic young woman who was ambitious to rule but was ruled in turn by her own women favorites. The coregent Infant Don Fernando (later King of Aragon) was, it is true, a wise and kindly man, but he permitted himself to be influenced by the clergy to a great extent. Next to him in power was the apostate Paul de Santa Maria whom the late king Don Henry III had appointed the executor of his will and the tutor of his heir, and who thus had an important voice in the regency. The Jews of Castile soon had occasion to feel the evil influence of this apostate. An edict was issued in the name of the four-year-old king (Oct. 25, 1408), that ordered the enforcement of the anti-Jewish paragraphs of the code of Alfonso the Wise. "Because the occupation of offices by Jews is detrimental to the Christian faith and to the faithful, Jews are debarred from occupying any office for all time to come. Any Jew who presumes to accept an office under a noble or a city is to be fined with an amount double that of his income from such an office; if he is unable to pay the amount of his fine, his entire property is to be confiscated, and he is to receive fifty lashes in addition." The hand of Paul de Santa Maria is clearly seen in this law. Knowing well the strength and the weaknesses of the Spanish Jews, he calculated that the prominent Jews, in danger of losing their offices and standing, would accept Christianity, and those who remained loyal, excluded from Christian society, and denied participation in public life, would degenerate in the course of time.

At the same time Paul de Santa Maria turned his venomous hatred upon Meir Alguades, the physician of the late king, probably because the latter formed the centre of a group of courtiers who unmasked and ridiculed Paul's pretensions. When the queen-mother with her crowned child came to Segovia, several priests charged a Jew of that city with the crime of buying a host from a sacristan for the purpose of desecrating it; the host, however, performed such amazing miracles that its Jewish buyer was seized with fear and trembling, and turned it over to the prior of a cloister. Whether this episode was a pure invention or contained some slender filament of truth that was purposely exaggerated with a network of lies, suffice it that Bishop Velasquez de Tordesillas attached extraordinary importance to it, and seized several Jews, including Don Meir Alguades, as accomplices. As a result, the regent Catalina instituted a criminal trial for the accused. Alguades and his fellow prisoners were put to the torture, and confessed their participation in the desecration of the host. Alguades is said to have confessed under torture the additional crime of having poisoned King Don Henry III, though it was well known that the king was in rather poor health from childhood. Don Meir and his fellow prisoners were put to death in a most horrible manner; every member of their bodies was dislocated. A synagog was converted into a church on that occasion.

This dismal period, which in reality was merely the shadow cast before by coming unhappy events, conjured up the gloomy spectre of a new Messianic movement that emanated from the mystics. The popular acceptance of the Zohar as a new divine revelation gained active adherents for the Cabala, and struck deeper root in Jewish soil. Three cabalists—Abraham of Granada, Shem Tob ben Joseph and Moses Botarel—were particularly active in propagating the teachings of the cabala and in beclouding the Jewish mind by its doctrines. Abraham of Granada (1391-1409) had the audacity to assert that "whoever does not conceive of God after the manner of the cabala is a renegade"; and he indicates that the apostasy of educated Jews in the course of the massacres of 1391 was due primarily to their study of the sciences and their contempt of the cabala. On the other hand, he regarded those persecutions and the conversion to Christianity of so many prominent Jews as a presage of the Messianic era. Shem Tob ben Joseph ibn Shem Tob (d. 1430) accuses the Jewish philosophers Maimonides and Gersonides of misleading the people into heresy and unbelief, and holds them directly responsible for the apostasy of so many Jews in the period of trial. In his book (Emunot) he hurls the most violent invectives at the Jewish thinkers and at philosophy, and maintains that the true salvation of Israel is to be found in the cultivation of the cabala that was pure truth and the most ancient Jewish tradition.

Both Abraham de Granada and Shem Tob were, while narrow, at least honest men; Moses Botarel of Cisneros, Castile, on the other hand, was a swindler and a cheat, and posed not only as a miracle worker and prophet, but even as a Messiah. Botalrel prophesied that in the spring of 1398 astounding wonders would occur that would announce the Messianic era. Later on he wrote a book that was full of lies and frauds. He addressed an epistle to "all his brothers and rabbis of Israel," in which he boasted that he was able to illuminate all the obscure places, and explain all the doubtful passages of the Bible and the Talmud, and styled himself the "Head of the Great Sanhedrin." Strange to say, the clear-headed Hasdai Crescas believed in this impostor, and proclaimed him in the synagog as a messenger of salvation. This fraud, however, must have been proven a miserable failure, since Jewish writers are ashamed to speak of it.

In the beginning of the fifteenth century three new bitter and virulent foes arose simultaneously against the Jews of Spain, determined upon their destruction. These three—a baptized Jew, a Dominican monk, and a pope who had been deserted on all sides—were Joshua Lorqui, Fray Vicente Ferrer and Pedro de Luna, the anti-pope Benedict XIII. Joshua Lorqui of Canis, who despite his indignation at the apostasy of his teacher, Paul de Santa Maria, must have followed his example, assumed after his baptism the name of Geronimo de Santa Fé, and he became the physician of Pope Benedict of Avignon. Like Paul de Santa Maria, he made it his mission to proselytize his former coreligionists by any means or to calumniate them. Vicente Ferrer, whom the Church had canonized, was one of those austere natures who regard the earth as a vale of tears and endeavor to make it such. Compared with the priests and the monks of his time, he was really a saint. He was not given to vice, despised gold and splendor, was imbued with sincere humility, and took his calling seriously. But he was possessed by the delusion that, owing to the corruption that prevailed in all Christendom, both lay and ecclesiastic, the world was about to come to an end and that it could be saved only by bringing all men to Christianity and to a life of penance. Vicente Ferrer accordingly reintroduced the old barbarous practices of the flagellants, passed from land to land with a band of blind followers, flogged his naked body daily with knotted ropes, enflamed the multitudes to similar practices, and believed that he would save the world by such means. Gifted with a melodious, sympathetic voice and with an eloquent tongue, this Dominican monk exerted a tremendous power over his auditors and could sway them whithersoever he listed. The fact that he had resigned a high office at the papal court to become a simple barefooted flagellant monk gained him many followers and admirers, because such renunciation of honor and wealth on the part of a priest was a rare phenomenon in those days. But Ferrer misused the gifts which nature bestowed upon him for bloody deeds of violence. The attitude of this monk proves most strikingly the thorough depravity of the Church at that time. That the Church was then disrupted by three contemporary popes, each of whom claimed to be the vicar of God and persecuted the opposition by word and deed, and that one of these popes, John XIII (1410-15) had exhausted every vice and every mortal sin, was a pirate, a dealer in indulgences, a voluptuary and a ravisher of women; all this does not yet characterize the degeneracy of the Church so much as does the fact that a truly pure and moral nature like Vicente Ferrer's was capable of harboring thoughts of murder and of preaching it against all who did not share in his follies. The dove turned into a venomous serpent, the lamb into a wild beast.

Instead of endeavoring to eradicate the abuses within the Church, as Wycliffe and other reformers did, Vicente Ferrer turned his attention to the Jews and heretics. By written and spoken word, he began a crusade against the Jews and continued it for many years. His first violent attacks were directed against the insincerity of the new-Christians of Spain. Moved either by fear of incurring the severe punishment meted out to apostates, or by the eloquent words of the friar, many Maranos repented of their lukewarmness to their new faith, and Ferrer regarded these repentant sinners as a great victory for the Church, as a triumph of the truths of Christianity. This success led him to hope that he would ultimately succeed in converting all the Jews. Because of his sway over the people, Ferrer was utilized by the kings of Spain, whenever possible, to quiet popular agitations in the course of the disturbances and the civil wars that then prevailed. For this reason he received the authority of the royal family not only to preach in the synagogs and in the mosques, but also to compel Jews and Mohammedans to listen to his sermons. With the cross in one hand and a scroll of the Torah in the other, with a retinue of flagellants and spearmen, he summoned the Jews, "with an awful voice," to place themselves under the shadow of the cross. The agitation of Ferrer and of the two other proselytizers brought such unspeakable sorrows upon the Jews of Spain that this period (1412-1415) forms one of the most tragic chapters in the sorrow-laden annals of Jewish history.

A short time after Ferrer's appearance in the Castilian court (1412), the regent Donna Catalina, the Infant Don Fernando and the apostate Paul de Santa Maria, in the name of the royal child Juan II, issued an edict containing twenty-four articles, the object of which was to impoverish the Jews, to humiliate them, to degrade them to the lowest social scale, or to force them to accept Christianity. Jews were to live in a special Jews' quarter (Juderia), which was to have only one gate for entry and exit; they were to engage in no craft nor in the practice of medicine, and, in general, to have no commercial relations with Christians. It goes without saying that they were not permitted to employ Christian servants, even for the minor services on the Sabbath, or to occupy any office. The independent civil jurisdiction enjoyed by the Jews was suspended. Several articles of the edict deal with the special garb to be worn by the Jews. Any Jew guilty of wearing the becoming national costume, or garments of fine material was to incur a heavy fine, and, upon a repetition of the offence, corporal punishment and confiscation. The wearing of the Jewish badge of a red color was, of course, especially emphasized. Jewish men were not to shave their beards or trim their hair on pain of one hundred lashes. No Jew must be addressed in speaking or writing by the honorary title of Don (Sir). Jews must carry no arms. Change of residence from one town to another was henceforth denied them; each Jew must remain fixed to his respective place of residence. A Jew who should venture to emigrate and was caught in the act was to forfeit his property, and be made the king's serf. The grandees and the burghers were forbidden under severe penalties to offer the Jews any protection whatever. These humiliating laws, in which the apostate Paul again had a hand, were executed with the utmost severity. A contemporary, Solomon Alami, describes the general distress that resulted from this edict: "Those who had lived in palaces were compelled to occupy squalid and dark huts. In the place of our rustling garments, we had to wear a miserable garb and become objects of contempt. We had to wander about like mourners, with beards unshorn. The wealthy tax-farmers sank into poverty, since they were ignorant of any handicraft from which to derive a livelihood. And even craftsmen could find no work. Want prevailed everywhere. Children died in their mothers' laps for lack of food and froze to death in winter for lack of clothing."

In the midst of this wretchedness, the Dominican monk Ferrer made his appearance in the synagogs with the cross in his hand, and preached Christianity in a thundering voice; offered, on the one hand, the comforts of life and a position of honor, and threatened, on the other, damnation in heaven and upon earth. The people, incited to fanaticism by Ferrer's impetuous words, emphasized his meaning by violent attacks upon the Jews. What a severe trial it was for the hapless Jews of Castile! The thought of flight was out of the question, since such a step involved the most horrible punishment. It is therefore no wonder that the weak and lukewarm, the worldly minded and the lovers of comfort succumbed to the temptation and saved themselves by baptism. Many Jews in the communities where Ferrer preached embraced Christianity. The baptized Jews of Salamanca called themselves "Vicentines," after their godfather. Many synagogs were converted by Ferrer into churches. In the four months of his proselytizing activities in Castile (Dec., 1412-March, 1413), Ferrer inflicted such mortal wounds upon the Jews that they bled to death in consequence.

When Ferrer was called to the kingdom of Aragon to assist in settling the question of succession and when, as a result of his activities, the Infant Don Fernando of Castile received the crown of Aragon (June, 1414), the new king appointed him his father-confessor, and granted all his desires. Foremost among these was the desire to proselytize, and Fernando accordingly issued a decree compelling the Jews of Aragon to attend Ferrer's sermons. Again Ferrer proceeded from town to town, employed his usual tactics against the Jews, and forced many of them in Saragossa, Daroca, Tortosa, Valencia and Majorca to accept Christianity. Altogether not less than twenty thousand Jews in Castile and Aragon were forced on this occasion to submit to baptism. The number of the Maranos was thus increased.

After Ferrer's departure, the distress among the Jews of Castile was somewhat relieved by the regent Catalina who issued a decree (July 17, 1414) permitting Jews to sell their merchandise in the markets, to hire Christian laborers for their fields and vineyards, and granting them again the right to change their place of residence from one town to another. But the end of the tribulations of the Spanish Jews was not yet. Pope Benedict XIII entertained still more evil designs against the Jews, and employed for their execution his newly converted physician, Joshua Lorqui or Geronimo de Santa Fé. Pope Benedict, who was branded by the ecumenical council of Pisa as a schismatic, heretic and perjurer, was even divested of his ecclesiastical dignities and excommunicated, but who was recognized as pope in the Pyrenean Peninsula and was bent upon converting all the Jews of Spain to Christianity. Should his efforts be crowned with success, would not such an achievement be a signal triumph for the Church and particularly for himself? Accordingly, Pope Benedict, with the approval of King Don Fernando, issued an invitation (Nov. 25, 1412) to learned rabbis and laymen of the kingdom of Aragon to present themselves in Tortosa for a religious disputation, in the course of which the apostate Joshua Lorqui was to prove from the Talmud that the Messiah had already come in the person of Jesus. The pope believed that if he succeeded in inducing the standard-bearers of Judaism to accept Christianity, the rank and file of the communities would voluntarily follow their example. The Jewish scholars who were to participate in the disputation were selected by Geronimo himself, and they were ordered to appear on pain of dire consequences. To accept or to decline the invitation was equally dangerous. Twenty-two of the most prominent Jews of Aragon therefore presented themselves at the disputation. At their head was Don Vidal Benveniste ibn Labi (Ferrer) of Saragossa, a man of prominence and culture, physician and Hebrew poet, son of Solomon de la Caballaria. Among the others were Joseph Albo of Monreal, a disciple of Hasdai Crescas, a man of philosophic knowledge and pure piety; Serahia Halevi Saladin of Saragossa, translator of an Arabic philosophic work; Astruc Levi of Daroca, a prominent man in his day, and Bonastruc of Gerona, a man of especial importance, to whom the pope issued a particularly urgent invitation.

Although all these Jewish notables were men of general education, and Don Vidal spoke Latin fluently, none of them possessed that greatness of soul and strength of character that impresses even the malicious enemy which Nachmanides evinced when he firmly appeared all alone against the two malevolent adversaries, the Dominican de Peñaforte and the apostate Pablo Christiani. The repeated humiliations and persecutions had robbed the Castilian Jews of their manly courage, too, and they were by no means equal to the perilous situation in which they were placed by the pope. Upon receipt of the invitations, they trembled with fear. Although they had mutually agreed to proceed in their arguments with calmness and deliberation and, on the whole, to act in concert, they departed from their resolution, exposed themselves to attack, and finally split into factions.

At the order of the pope, the apostate Geronimo prepared a program that was to serve as an outline of the disputation. At first it was to be proven from the Talmud and cognate literature that the Messiah had already appeared in the person of Jesus. Should this means fail to bring about a wholesale conversion of the Jews, as the papal court flattered itself, a war of annihilation was to be declared upon the Talmud as containing sheer abominations and as fortifying the Jews in their delusions. Geronimo de Santa Fé accordingly wrote a treatise in proof of the Messiaship and the divinity of Jesus. This work that breathes at once the patristic and the rabbinical spirit was examined by the pope and the cardinals, and formed the basis of the disputation.

This disputation was the most remarkable ever held. It continued, with some interruptions, for a year and nine months (Feb., 1413-Nov. 12, 1414), in the course of which sixty-eight sessions were held. In the foreground there stood the pope who, deserted by nearly all Christendom and driven from his own residence, desired a favorable outcome, not for the glory of the faith, but for his own advancement; next to him stood a baptized Jew, who attacked rabbinic Judaism with rabbinical weapons, and in the background there stood a raving Dominican friar with his band of flagellants, prepared to make a murderous assault upon the Jews in order to emphasize the arguments of the Tortosa disputations. The helpless and perplexed Jews, surrounded by bitter enemies on the earth, could lift their eyes only to Heaven. When they were first received in audience by the pope (Feb. 6, 1413) and requested to give their names for the records, they were seized with terror; the pope, however, calmed them and explained that what he asked was merely a customary formality. On the whole, he treated them at the beginning with kindness and consideration. He explained that he summoned them merely to convince himself whether Geronimo's allegations that the Talmud proved the divinity of Jesus were the truth or not. He guaranteed them absolute freedom of speech. After the first audience the pope dismissed them kindly, and provided for their comfort. This friendly reception encouraged some of the notables to hope that the outcome might prove favorable to the cause of their religion. But they knew the vicar of God very little.

The disputation was to begin the next day. When the Jewish notables entered the assembly hall, the splendor that met their eyes made an overwhelming impression upon them. The pope in his magnificent vestments sat on an elevated throne; around him were the cardinals and the high dignitaries of the church in their dazzling robes, and an audience of nearly a thousand nobles. The handful of the defenders of Judaism lost courage at the sight of this defiant power of Christianity. The pope himself conducted the proceedings, and opened the session with an address to the Jews, in which he emphasized the point that the question at issue was not whether Judaism or Christianity was the true religion. The truth of Christianity was beyond controversy; Judaism had been true once, but had been superseded by the later revelations. The disputation was to revolve solely about the point whether the Talmud really acknowledges the Messiahship of Jesus. The Jews were thus limited to a narrow line of defense. When the pope yielded the floor to his tool Geronimo, the latter, after kissing the pope's foot, delivered a verbose address teeming with Christian, Jewish and even scholastic subtleties, as well as with threats. Thereupon, Don Vidal Benveniste, whom the notables had selected as their spokesman, replied in a long Latin address, upon which the pope complimented him. Don Vidal pointed out Geronimo's malice in that the latter, even before the arguments were begun, had already threatened them with the sword and with punishment. At the end the Jewish notables gathered courage to ask the pope to excuse them from the disputation. The pope, of course, declined this request, and invited them to continue the discussion on the following day.

With hearts full of anxiety, the Jewish notables and the entire community of Tortosa repaired to the synagog on the same day and supplicated to Him who had so often delivered them out of their distress to direct their tongue, lest, by some slip, they irritate the lions who were ready to devour them. Zerahiah Halevi Saladin reflected in his sermon the dejected spirit of his audience.

The disputation was conducted at first in a friendly spirit. Geronimo quoted some obscure Talmudic passages in order to prove that the Talmud itself attested to some extent to the Messiahship of Jesus. The pope often presided; but, worried by the fears of despisal on the part of the council of Constance, he had frequently to absent himself in order to hold consultations with his friends. In the pope's absence, the general of the Dominicans or the master of the papal palace presided. The Jewish notables easily refuted Geronimo's insipid statements, but their words were given a false construction, and the minutes were often made to contain the statements that the Jews had admitted this or that point contrary to the facts. Several of them found it necessary, therefore, to write down their refutations. But even these written arguments were treated with much arbitrariness. Certain points were not admitted into the discussion as irrelevant. The defenders of Judaism who were hectored and harassed wished to decline all replies. But the pope suddenly discarded his mask of friendship, showed himself in his true light, and threatened them with death. The wrangling had already continued for sixty-two days, and the representatives of Judaism showed as yet no sign of an inclination to accept baptism. Their power of resistance was rather increasing in the course of the struggle. Accordingly, in the sixty-third session, Pope Benedict ordered a change of tactics. At the behest of the pope, Geronimo arose as an accuser of the Talmud, and asserted that it contained abominations, blasphemies, immoralities and heresies of all sorts and must therefore be condemned. With that object in view, he wrote another treatise at the request of the pope, in which he gathered together every incongruous remark that ever escaped any Talmudist or Haggadist among so many hundreds, and even asserted that the Talmud permitted to strike one's parents, to blaspheme God, practice idolatry, and to commit perjury if an oath is declared null and void in advance on the Day of Atonement. A scrupulous ordinance with reference to oaths and vows Geronimo transformed into a vicious institution, as did Nicholas Donin, and asserted that, in accordance with it, Jews made light of an oath to a Christian. It is self-evident that this apostate repeated the calumny of Alfonso of Valladolid that the Jews were cursing the Christians in their daily prayers. Any statement in the Talmud that expressed hostility to heathens or to Jewish-Christian apostates Geronimo interpreted as leveled against Christians—a fraud that led to most serious consequences, since the enemies of the Jews repeated this slander without any further investigation.

The representatives of Judaism, it is true, refuted the cited damaging passages, but were so hard beset that they split into two parties. Don Astruc Levi handed in a written statement, in which he maintained that the Talmudic passages in question were only individual expressions that were not authoritative, and the majority of the nobles agreed with him. Joseph Albo and Don Vidal maintained, on the other hand, that the Talmudic Haggadah was authoritative, but they explained that the passages in question had a different sense and must not be taken literally. The pope and his creatures thus succeeded at least in creating a division among the representatives of Judaism. But all the means employed for the accomplishment of the main purpose, the wholesale conversion of Jews through the example of their most prominent leaders, failed completely. The fanatic Vicente Ferrer again began his proselytizing activities with his band of flagellants, and he succeeded again in leading to baptism many thousands of Jews (Feb.-June, 1414). In the larger Jewish communities of Saragossa, Calatajud and Daroca only individual Jews deserted their faith; but smaller communities, whose very existence was threatened by the hostile Christian environment, went over to Christianity in a body—about three thousand souls. All these new converts were brought to Tortosa by the papal court, little by little, in larger or smaller groups, were led into the assembly hall, and there publicly initiated into their new faith. All this was done to proclaim the victory of the Church by means of those living trophies, to discourage the defenders of Judaism and to bring them to the realization that their resistance was futile and that, upon their return, they would no longer find any Jewish communities. It seems that Todros Benveniste, of Saragossa, a brother of the valiant champion Vidal Benveniste, as well as several members of the famous and aristocratic family of Benveniste Caballeria, also accepted baptism. Bonafos, one of the eight Caballeria brothers, who, as a Christian, bore the name of Micer Pedro de la Caballeria and who achieved eminence as a teacher of jurisprudence, became an arch-enemy of Judaism. How the heart of Vidal Ferrer Benveniste, the spokesman of the defenders of Judaism, must have broken at the news of the apostasy of his own kinsman! It is no mean achievement that Vidal Benveniste, Joseph Albo, Astruc Levi and their associates did not succumb to the crushing effect of all the trials to which they were subjected. The pope was disappointed in his expectations; not a single one of the Jewish notables wavered, and the wholesale conversions did not materialize. The large communities of Aragon and Castile, with the exception of individual weaklings, remained loyal to their faith. Benedict could not appear before the Council of Constance that was soon to assemble as a victorious champion of the Church in the hope of making capital out of it.

In his dejection the pope vented his spleen upon the Talmud and the Jews. In the last session of the Tortosa disputations, he dismissed the Jewish notables very ungraciously, and informed them of his hostile decisions. These decisions, the publication of which was delayed for six months by some obstacles, were embodied in a bull (May 11, 1415), containing thirteen articles. This bull prohibited the Jews from reading and teaching the Talmud and the literature related to it. Copies of the Talmud were sought out and destroyed. Polemics written by Jews against Christianity, and particularly a work called Mar Mar Jesus, were not to be read on pain of incurring the penalty of blasphemy. Every community, large or small, was to possess only one poorly equipped synagog; Jews were to be separated from the Christians, were not to eat, bathe or trade with them; were to occupy no office, engage in no handicraft or practice medicine. The bull lays special stress upon the wearing of the red or yellow Jewish badge, and compels all Jews to listen to Christian sermons three times a year. After each sermon the contents of this bull were to be read to the Jews. Gonzalo de Santa Maria, a son of the apostate Paul, was charged with the strict execution of the provisions of this bull. For the most part, this bull was merely a repetition of the anti-Jewish decree of Queen Catalina; but while that decree was applicable only to the Jews of Castile, the papal bull was to apply to all Jewry under the dominion of the cross.

The hostility of this pope had, fortunately, no immediate effect. While he was engaged in harassing the Jews, the Council of Constance deposed him. Vicente Ferrer also turned against him; admonished the king of Aragon to forsake "the degenerated and hypocritical pope," and preached everywhere, in the churches and in the streets, that "such a man as this pope deserves to be stricken dead by any orthodox Christian." Forsaken by his patrons, friends and even protégés, all that was left to Pedro de Luna of his former splendor was a small fortress, Peñiscola, which King Fernando threatened to besiege and thus starve the pope into submission. The ambitious and stubborn Benedict covered himself with ridicule in the end by persisting in playing the role of a pope in his insignificant retreat. Upon his death, his cardinals elected two popes instead of one.

The fate of the malicious apostate Joshua Lorqui-Geronimo de Santa Fé, upon the fall of his pope, is not known. He received in Jewish literature the well-earned name of "blasphemer" (Megaddef). His two sons who also embraced Christianity achieved positions of eminence in Aragon. One of them, Francisco de Santa Fé, became a member of the council of state, but was burned at the stake in his old age as a Judaizing heretic. King Fernando of Aragon, Catalina of Castile, and Vicente Ferrer disappeared from the scene within a few years (1417-1419). The latter still lived long enough to experience the humiliation of being anathematized by the Council of Constance for the very fanatic self-torture that had formerly stamped him as a saint.

But though the persecutors of the Jews disappeared, the evil conditions they created remained. The exclusive laws of Catalina were in force in Castile, and the bull of Pope Benedict was in force in Aragon. Ferrer's proselytizing activities had inflicted deep wounds upon the Spanish and extra-Spanish communities. In Portugal alone Ferrer met with little sympathy. The king of Portugal, Don Juan I, was then engaged in gaining the first foothold in Africa, opposite Gibraltar, that was to lay the foundation for the maritime power of the Portuguese. When Vicente Ferrer asked Don Juan's permission to come to Portugal for the purpose of carrying on there his characteristic activities, the king replied that he could come only with a crown of red-hot iron on his forehead. Portugal was the only asylum for the Jews of the Pyrenean Peninsula, and many Jews fled thither from Spain. The king issued a decree that the immigrated Neo-Christians be not harassed and be not surrendered to Spain.

But in many other countries wherein the fanatic Dominican had set foot, or where the reports of his doings and misdoings had reached, the Jews had to drain the bitter cup of sorrow. In Savoy, which Vicente Ferrer had visited, the Jews were compelled to hide with their sacred books in the mountain caverns. Germany was ever a fertile soil for Jewish persecutions, and the anarchy that prevailed there during the reign of Sigismund and while the Council of Constance was in session aggravated the miseries of the Jews. Even the Italian communities that remained unmolested for the most part lived in constant fear that the agitation against them might meet with sympathy in the politically disrupted country. They therefore called a great synod in Bologne and in Forli (1416, 1418) for the purpose of devising means to avert the threatened danger and particularly to gain the favor of the pope and of the college of cardinals by satisfying their greed for money.

Fortunately the long controversy over the papacy and the bitter contentions of the Council of Constance terminated at that time in the selection of a pope who, though full of hypocrisy, did not belong to the most depraved members of the college of cardinals. Martin V, of whom his contemporaries said that he was regarded as artless and good before his election, but proved himself more shrewd than good afterward, treated the Jews rather harshly when they greeted him, upon his departure from Constance, in solemn procession with burning torches and with the scrolls of the Torah in their hands. When they asked him to grant them sufferance, he replied from his white palfrey with its silken and golden ornaments: "You have the Law, but you do not understand it; the old has been superseded by the new revelation." Nevertheless, Martin V proved himself mildly disposed toward the Jews. At the suggestion of Emperor Sigismund, the pope confirmed the privileges conferred upon the Jews of Germany and Savoy by Emperor Ruprecht; that is, he reproved attacks of violence upon the lives and property of the Jews and their forcible conversion (Feb. 12, 1418). The fickle and greedy Emperor Sigismund, who, it is true burdened the Jewish communities also with the expenses incurred by the Council of Constance, and who extorted money from them on every conceivable occasion, but who was not possessed by a spirit of persecution, thereupon issued a decree calling upon the German princes, officials, cities and subjects to permit his bondsmen (the Jews) to enjoy the kindness and the freedom which the pope had conferred upon them (Feb. 26, 1418). The deputies appointed by the Italian synod also appealed to the pope for protection. Even the Spanish Jews sent a deputation to the same pope for the same purpose. One of the Spanish deputies, it seems, was the enormously rich Samuel Abravalla, who had submitted to baptism during the massacre of Valencia. Upon the complaint of the Jews that their life was insecure, their convictions violated and their sacred institutions defiled, Pope Martin issued a bull (Jan. 31, 1419) introduced by these words: "Inasmuch as the Jews bear the image of God, and the remnant of Israel is destined to be saved some day, we decree, in accordance with the precedents set by our predecessors, that they be not annoyed in their synagogs, be not forced to violate their laws, customs and habits, be not driven to baptism against their will, be not compelled to observe Christian holidays, or to wear new badges, and be not interfered with in their commercial relations with Christians." This bull was, in a measure, a protest against the one issued by the anti-pope Benedict. This friendliness of Pope Martin to the Jews was possibly due largely to the rich gifts the Jewish deputies brought him. Without cash, nothing could be obtained from him; with it, everything. "At this (papal) court all friendship ceases when the pennies give out," wrote the German envoy. When the Emperor Sigismund imposed extraordinary taxes upon the German and Italian Jews he extenuated his conduct by stating that the privileges which he had induced the pope to renew for the protection of the Jews were not obtained without a price.

CHAPTER II

A HELP IN NEED

(1420-1472)

While the events narrated in the preceding chapters were taking place, civilization took one step forward. The festering corruption of the Church, the self-deifying arrogance of the popes, the obscenity of the priests and the monks sharpened the conscience of many individuals, opened the eyes of the blind, and emboldened them to attack the very foundation of the Catholic faith. No improvement could be expected from the prelates, jurists and diplomatists who were assembled in Constance to discuss the reformation of the Church, because they wished merely to whitewash a decayed wall, to transfer the power of the papacy to the higher clergy. A Czech priest, John Huss of Prague, stimulated by the Englishman Wycliffe, spoke the word that could extricate Christianity from the snare of the Church; not this or that pope, but the papacy itself, with the entire organization of the Catholic Church, was the fundamental evil that was afflicting Christendom. The funeral pyre which the Council of Constance kindled for the free-spoken priest, illuminated all the more brightly the truths to which he gave voice and set on fire a multitude in Bohemia that waged a war of life and death with Catholicism. Whenever a faction within Christianity rebels against the established Church, it invariably assumes an Old Testament, a Jewish tinge, as it were. The Hussites regarded Catholicism as paganism and themselves as Israelites who had to wage a holy war upon the Philistines, Moabites and Ammonites. They destroyed churches and cloisters as seats of a wretched paganism, as temples of Baal, Molech and Astarte. The Hussite wars, a product at once of religious resentment and of the race-hatred of the Czechs against the Germans, began to purify somewhat the foul air of medievalism.

These religious wars brought new tribulations upon the Jews. The Hussites betrayed no particular animosity toward the Jews; at most, they plundered Jewish houses alongside Catholic ones on one occasion, and vigorously denounced Jewish usury. The Catholics, on the other hand, accused the Jews of supplying the Hussites secretly with money and weapons, and subjected them to the most cruel persecutions, as friends and allies of heretics, in the Bavarian cities that bordered on the Bohemian Forest. The Dominicans, this "army of Anti-Christ," as they were called, who preached vengeance upon the Hussites, included the Jews in their denunciations, and incited the peoples and the princes against them. Just as the crusades against the Mohammedans and the Albigenses began with the massacre of Jews, so the crusade against the Hussites. The Jews of Austria were the first victims of this reawakened fanaticism. The grave and worthy arch-duke Albrecht, who had prospects of occupying the German imperial throne, was formally goaded on against "the enemies of God."

Fabulous stories were invented, stories that were old but ever effective to drive to extremes a noble prince who had no conception of the trickery employed by the enemies of the Jews. Three Christian boys ventured on the frozen Danube near Vienna, when the ice broke and they were drowned. When their parents did not find them, a rumor spread that the Jews had murdered them in order to use their blood for an approaching Passover. In Enns, a wealthy Jew named Israel was charged with buying a host from the wife of a sexton and distributing its crumbs among the Jewish communities within and without Austria. The charges of child-murder and of desecration of hosts were very effective in the fifteenth century. Upon the command of the duke, the sexton's wife and her two alleged accomplices, Israel and his wife, were brought to Vienna, examined, and made to confess. The chronicles are silent as to the means employed in effecting this confession, but the medieval-Christian procedure in such trials is well known.

The archduke Albrecht, thereupon, had all the Jews of his domain imprisoned early one morning (May 23, 1420). On that occasion the property of the well-to-do Jews was confiscated, and the poor were banished from the country at once. In prison, wives were separated from their husbands, children from their parents. When their helplessness had reached the point of despair, the priests came with their honeyed words and demanded their conversion. The weaklings saved their lives by accepting baptism; the steadfast, on the other hand, killed their dear ones and themselves by severing their arteries with straps or ropes, or whatever else was handy. The survivors, exhausted by nearly one year's imprisonment and torture, and after their children were torn from them and sent to the cloisters, were burned at the stake (March 12, 1421). In Vienna alone more than one hundred Jews were burned in a meadow on the shore of the Danube. In addition, the archduke Albrecht issued a decree that no Jews were henceforth to remain in Austria.

The Church, however, had little joy in its converts. The majority of them embraced every opportunity to leave the country and to return to Judaism. They wandered either to Bohemia, rendered more tolerant by the schism of the Hussites, or northward to Poland and southward to Italy. Meanwhile, the desperate struggle between the wild Hussites and the no less barbaric Catholics, between the Czechs and the Germans, broke out in all its fury. Many nations participated in the war over the question as to whether or not the cup be used for the laity in the eucharist. The emperor Sigismund had to call the imperial army to its standards, and to hire mercenaries, both native and foreign, from Brabant and Holland. Armed bands marched from all corners of Europe upon Prague, where the blind hero Ziska defied a whole world of foes. In the course of their march, the German soldiers proved their heroism solely in the murder of Jews. The Jews of the Rhine countries, of Thuringia and of Bavaria who refused to accept baptism were slain in cold blood, and the soldiers threatened to annihilate all the Jews upon their triumphant return. Many Jews were on the point of killing their children with their own hands to save them from falling into the hands of the cruel crusaders. Appeals were made to the eminent Rabbi of Mayence, Jacob ben Moses Möllin Halevi (Maharil, b. about 1365, d. 1427), the author of many ritual regulations and of synagogal melodies which are still in vogue in many Jewish communities, to supplicate the mercy of God to avert the threatened danger. In response the rabbi ordered all communities to institute a general fast, amidst fervent prayers, on the days intervening between New Year's Day and the Day of Atonement (1421), and three additional successive fast days to be observed with all the rigor of the Day of Atonement itself. It was a period of feverish anxiety for the German Jews. They were placed in a position where they had to supplicate to Heaven to grant the victory to the Hussites. And it seems as though their prayers were heard. For soon after, upon the news that Ziska was approaching, the German armies gathered near Saaz were seized by such a panic that they fled in every direction. Some of the soldiers who had threatened the Jews with death wandered about starving and knocked at Jewish doors for a piece of bread which was gladly given to them. The fugitives were not in a condition to harm in the least even a single Jewish child.

The Dominican friars, however, continued to include the Jews in their fulminations against the Hussite heretics, admonished the faithful to have no intercourse with them, and consciously or unconsciously incited attacks upon their persons and property. The Jews appealed to Pope Martin V, and again obtained a favorable bull from him (Feb. 23, 1422), in which he reminded the Christians that the Christian religion was of Jewish origin and that the Jews were necessary to prove the truths of Christianity, and warned the friars to refrain from preaching hostility to the Jews. He advised the Catholics to preserve friendly relations with their Jewish neighbors and censured most severely any acts of violence against them. But this friendly papal bull was of as little effect as the protection that the emperor Sigismund had solemnly promised the Jews. The spirit of Christianity remained one of intolerance and persecution. The monks did not cease their attacks upon the God-accursed Jewish people, the people did not refrain from injuring, harassing or killing them, and succeeding popes themselves ignored this bull. Disregarding the pope and the emperor, the people of Cologne expelled from their midst probably the most ancient German community; the banished settled in Deutz (1426). From Ravensburg, Ueberlingen and Lindau, in Southern Germany, the Jews were expelled on account of a fabricated blood-accusation (1420).

As a result of the persecutions to which they were constantly subjected, the intellectual powers of the German Jews deteriorated. Even in Talmudic studies the German rabbis were only mediocre. Some rabbis were appointed by the dukes; it is known, at least, that Emperor Sigismund had ordered his Jewish factor, Hayyim (Haym) of Landshut "to appoint three rabbis (Judenmeister) in Germany," as the Spanish king appointed chief rabbis. In cases of such interferences it is probable that money rather than worth was the decisive factor. For permission to conduct a rabbinical academy the rabbi had to pay a special tax, though instruction was free in such institutions. More frequently such permission was denied or greatly restricted. Besides Jacob Möllin only one other rabbi, Menahem of Merseburg, achieved fame in this period as a rabbinical authority.

The intellectual services of the Spanish Jews at this period were not much more satisfactory, though their condition had improved. Under the feeble but kind-hearted Juan II, they breathed more freely. The king, or rather his favorite, or still more correctly, his protector, the chancellor Alvaro de Luna, by whom Don Juan was willingly guided, treated the Jews with extraordinary favor. In his efforts to put a stop to the internal dissensions, the party feuds and the uprisings of the nobility against the king, he availed himself of the ability of gifted Jews and particularly of the shrewd and noble-minded Abraham Benveniste. He felt that the disorganized financial condition of the country could be remedied only by the employment of Jews in financial offices. As soon as Don Juan reached his majority, and felt himself free from the intrigues of the regency (1432) the oppressive and humiliating anti-Jewish laws were absolutely disregarded though not repealed. The king appointed Abraham Benveniste, distinguished for his wealth, wisdom and nobility of character, chief rabbi and chief judge over all the Castilian communities, and conferred upon him the authority to exercise criminal jurisdiction also, a right of which Don Juan I had deprived the Jews half a century before. Abraham Benveniste utilized the king's favor to check the demoralization that ensued in the communities in consequence of the massacres and the forcible conversions. With the consent of the king, he summoned rabbis and other prominent men from the various communities, to Valladolid, and discussed with them in the king's palace the provisions of a statute (1432) confirmed by the king as an authoritative law, binding upon all Castilian Jewry. This statute contains provisions for the restoration of Talmudic academies that had almost totally disappeared in the course of the recent misfortunes, for the establishment of lower schools, for the election of judges and rabbis for the communities, for checking immorality, and particularly denunciations, for the levying and apportionment of communal taxes, and proscribes the wearing of costly garments and ornaments, particularly on the part of women, that had excited the envy and hatred of the Christian population against the wealthy Jews. Abraham Benveniste revived the drooping spirits; but the higher intellectual activities he could not reawaken. Even his zeal for the revival of the study of the Talmud did not produce noteworthy results. The neo-Hebraic poetry that had yielded such glorious blossoms on Spanish soil became, like all other mental products, insipid and colorless. On the whole, this period produced but few poets, with the exception, perhaps, of Solomon Dafiera, Don Vidal Benveniste, the Jewish spokesman at the Tortosa disputation, and Solomon Bonfed. The latter was more gifted than the others, and endeavored to imitate Ibn Gabirol; but he possessed only his sensitiveness but not his poetic endowments.

The literary activity of this period was devoted almost exclusively to a courageous resistance to the proselytizing zeal of the Church. Jewish thinkers regarded it as their duty to proclaim their convictions aloud, and to warn and to steel against seduction the weak among the remnant of Israel in Spain and elsewhere. The more the Church extended its tentacles towards the Jews, and used every and all means to draw them within her pale, the more did the Jews on their side exert themselves with all their power to cling to their ancient possession. Above all, the unthinking masses must be guarded against the confusion of religious conceptions and doctrines. Jewish preachers dwelt, therefore, upon the topic of the absolute unity of God. They dared not forbear to emphasize the essential irreconcilable difference between the Jewish and the Christian conception of God, and to stamp a fusion of the two as untrue and pernicious. This period resembled the one when the Jewish Hellenists strove to tempt their brethren to desert their God, and were supported in their efforts by the swords of the Syrians. Thus there sprang up in this period a rich polemic literature the object of which was to ward off the defamation and abuse directed against Judaism, and possibly also to rouse the Neo-Christians who were driven into the Church by fear of death not to rest content in Christianity. Most of these polemics were therefore apologies in response to attacks, particularly on the part of apostates who were eager to make proselytes and heaped abuse upon Jews and Judaism. Solomon Paul de Santa Maria who had managed to become the bishop of his native city wrote, even in his eighty-second year (1434), a year before his death, a venomous book against Jews and Judaism, "An Inquiry into the Scriptures" in the form of a dialog between the unbelieving Saul and the regenerated Paul—a very orthodox but otherwise rather stupid work. Another apostate, Juan de España, of Toledo, a former rabbi who was converted by Vicente Ferrer at an advanced age, made likewise violent attacks upon his former religion. He wrote a memoir of his conversion and a commentary to Psalm LXXI in which he seeks to prove the sincerity of his conversion and the necessity for the Jews to adjure their errors. The traitorous apostate Lorqui-Geronimo de Santa Fé likewise circulated widely the charges against the Talmud and against his former coreligionists, which he had prepared for the Tortosa disputation. How many vacillating Jews may have been influenced to accept Christianity by the sincere or hypercritical zeal of such men who sprang from their own midst and who were familiar with Jewish literature?

One cannot, therefore, overestimate the services of the men, who, not without danger, stood in the breach, and circulated instructive works among the people in order to strengthen their loyalty to their ancestral faith. Above all, it was Don Vidal (Ferrer) ibn Labi and Joseph Albo, the same men who had proven such staunch defenders of their faith on the occasion of the Tortosa disputation, who warded off hostile attacks with their pen also. The former wrote a polemic in Hebrew against Geronimo's misrepresentations of the Talmud. Joseph Albo wrote down in Spanish a religious discussion he had with a high church dignitary for the edification of his coreligionists. Isaac Nathan ben Kalonymos, a Provençal Jew whose father was a native of Spain, who came in frequent contact with Christian scholars and was often called upon to justify his religious convictions, wrote a refutation of Geronimo's charges under the title of "Rebuke of a Misleader." He also compiled a laborious work that was calculated to assist Jewish scholars in warding off attacks upon Judaism. In his intercourse with Christians, Isaac Nathan had frequent occasion to hear the claim that certain Christian dogmas were drawn from the Old Testament—a claim based for the most part upon a misunderstood Hebrew expression. The presentation of a comprehensive synopsis of the entire biblical vocabulary by means of which the correct, evident meaning of the words could be seen at a glance would enable him, he believed, to obviate this misinterpretation springing from an ignorance of the original text, or would facilitate its refutation on the part of the Jews. By means of such a compilation, anyone could see at a glance not only how often each word occurs in the Bible but also the meaning attaching to each word in the context. With this object in view, Isaac Nathan undertook a gigantic work to which he devoted a number of years (September, 1437-1445); he compiled a biblical concordance. Although this work was of a purely mechanical character, Isaac Nathan rendered the study of the Bible an extraordinary and lasting service by his concordance. Born of the transitory need of defence against religious attacks, Isaac Nathan's concordance brought about the lasting victories already achieved or still to be achieved by Judaism in the course of time. Isaac Nathan is the author of several other works also.

Joseph ibn Shem-Tob (b. about 1400; martyred about 1460), a man of philosophic training, a prolific writer and a popular preacher who had access to the court of Don Juan II, likewise directed his arrows against Christianity in order to expose the untenableness and unreasonableness of its dogmas. In the course of his frequent contact with eminent Christians, ecclesiastics and laymen, he was led to familiarize himself with the entire field of Christian theology in order to be in a position to give cogent reasons for his refusal to accept Christianity, and to refute the trite allegation that Judaism was superseded by Christianity. He was often called upon to engage in religious discussions in order to defend his faith. He therefore embodied the results of his investigations in a little book, entitled "Doubts About the Religion of Jesus," in which he criticized the Christian dogmas with telling effect. Joseph ibn Shem-Tob wrote, in addition, an exhaustive commentary on Profiat Duran's satire against Christianity for the edification of his coreligionists, and made accessible to them Hasdai Crescas' polemic against Christianity by translating it from Spanish into Hebrew.

Among the polemics of this period Hayyim ibn Musa of Bejar (near Salamanca, b. about 1390, d. 1460), a contemporary of Joseph ibn Shem-Tob, whose name was but recently rescued from oblivion, deserves special mention. Hayyim ibn Musa was a physician, poet and writer, and had access to the Spanish nobles and court by virtue of his medical skill. He, too, was frequently called upon to discuss religious questions with ecclesiastics and learned laymen. A conversation reported by Hayyim ibn Musa characterizes the tone that then prevailed in Spain before the austere inquisition silenced every free utterance. A learned priest once asked him why the Jews, if they really possessed the true faith, did not again acquire possession of the holy land and the holy city. To which ibn Musa replied that inasmuch as they had lost them on account of the sins of their fathers, they could acquire them again only by means of absolute atonement and purification. But ibn Musa, on his part, asked this counter question: "Why are the Holy Sepulchre and other sacred places connected with the passion left in hands of the Mohammedan unbelievers and not in the possession of the Christians who have the power to purify themselves from all the sins by the simple expedient of confession and absolutions on the part of any priest?" Before the priest could frame a fitting reply, a knight recently returned from Palestine who was present at this discussion, interposed the remark that the Mohammedans alone deserve to be in possession of the temple site and of the Holy Land because they hold their houses of prayer in greater veneration than do the Christians or the Jews. The Christians committed all sorts of excesses in the churches of Jerusalem during the vigils before Easter, harbored there thieves and murderers, engaged in bloody feuds among one another, and abandoned themselves to lewd practices. They defiled their churches as the Jews had formerly defiled the temple. God, in his wisdom, had wrested the Holy City from the Jews and the Christians and had entrusted it to the Mohammedans because in their hands it is safe from desecration. Both the Christian priest and the Jewish physician could find no reply to this observation on the part of the knight.

Hayyim ibn Musa devoted himself particularly to the refutation of the allegations contained in the writings of the Franciscan Nicholas de Lyra, the main source whence the Christians drew their attacks upon Judaism. Disputations, no matter how frequently held, never led to any results and enabled both parties to claim the victory because such disputations revolve mostly about subordinate points and particularly because the parties do not agree beforehand upon common premises. Hayyim ibn Musa desired to introduce order in disputations. The principles in accordance with which the defence of Judaism is to be conducted he laid down in his book, "Shield and Spear."

Two writers of Spanish descent, Simon ben Zemah Duran and his son Solomon Duran, also enriched the polemic literature against Christianity though they lived in Algiers far removed from the scene of proselytizing activities. The former (1361-1439) in his somewhat philosophic elucidation of Judaism (Magen Abot) devoted a chapter to Christianity under the title of "Bow and Shield." The rabbi of Algiers evinces therein an extraordinary familiarity with the literature of the New Testament and with the dogmas of the Church, and criticises both unsparingly. Solomon Duran I (b. about 1400, d. 1467) who succeeded his father in the rabbinate of Algiers combined a decisive tendency to a rational conception of Judaism with his profound knowledge of the Talmud. In contrast with his ancestor Nahmanides and with his father, he was a sworn foe of the cabala. In refutation of Geronimo de Santa Fé's shameless and malicious charges against the Talmud he wrote an exhaustive treatise under the title of "A War of Duty."

Religious philosophy which the Jewish-Spanish thinkers had developed and raised to the height of a science found its last representative in Spain at this period. The same men who defended Judaism against the assaults of Christianity defended it also against the Jewish obscurantists who, like the Dominicans, desired to substitute blind faith for reason. Zealots like Shem-Tob ibn Shem-Tob who had received only a one-sided, Talmudic education, and were led astray by the cabala, regarded scientific investigations as a road to heresy. The circumstance that it was educated Jews for the most part who succumbed to the proselytizing activities of Vicente Ferrer and Pope Benedict, convinced the mystics that a scientific training, nay, any religious speculation whatever led to apostasy. The contempt of science led them logically to condemn Maimonides and all Jewish thinkers who granted to reason an important voice in matters religious. Against these obscurantists Joseph Albo entered the lists, and wrote an exhaustive work on religious philosophy (Ikkarim, Cardinal Principles) in which he attempted to separate the essential doctrines of Judaism from the non-essential, and to establish the line of demarcation between faith and heresy.

Joseph Albo (about 1380-about 1444) of Monreal, one of the chief representatives of Judaism in the Tortosa disputation and who, probably as a result of the intolerance of Pope Benedict, was compelled to move to Soria, was, as a physician, familiar with the natural sciences of his day, and as a disciple of Hasdai Crescas with the current philosophy. Though a strict adherent of Talmudic Judaism, he was, like his teacher, a friend of philosophic speculation, and sought to reconcile the two elements. But he did not possess the penetration of his teacher, and was far from being a systematic thinker. At the suggestion of friends he began to investigate the extent to which the freedom of speculating upon things religious is permitted within Judaism; and this led him to examine into the correctness of the thirteen articles of Maimonides, as to whether their number could be increased or reduced, as to whether the one who does not accept them all is to be regarded as a heretic. This investigation resulted in his system of religious philosophy, the last Jewish philosophic work in Spain. Albo's presentation differs considerably from that of his predecessors. The circumstance that he was one of the ablest and most graceful preachers exerted a decisive influence upon his style which is easy, comprehensible, popular and fascinating. Albo elucidates every philosophic thought by means of striking illustrations, and by biblical verses and Haggadic passages. But what his presentation gains in intelligibility by these embellishments it loses in depth as a result of a certain prolixity.

It is a remarkable phenomenon that Albo who believed that he founded his system of religious philosophy upon the fundamental principles of Judaism based them, after all, upon a principle that was precisely of Christian origin; to such an extent does environment affect even those who make conscious efforts to avert its influence. Albo lays it down as the fundamental principle of his system that the salvation of the soul should be man's highest aim upon earth, and is best promoted by Judaism. According to Albo the highest good consists not so much in the elevation of the soul as in its salvation. Man achieves the perfection which God has destined for him only after his death; this life is merely a preparation for that higher life. But how is man to achieve that perfection? There are, to be sure, three kinds of institutions whose object it is to raise man from barbarism to civilization. The law of nature, a sort of social compact, that protects society against thievery, robbery and murder; political legislation that provides for order and morals and finally a philosophic legislation that concerns itself directly with the promotion of the enduring happiness of man, or, at least, with removing the obstacles from it. But all these institutions, even the most highly developed, are not able to further the true welfare of man, his salvation, eternal bliss, for they concern themselves solely with actions, but do not teach the correct view, the principle underlying all action. Inasmuch as eternal life, the bliss beyond death, is the highest goal of man, neither a political nor a philosophic legislation suffices, but a divine legislation is necessary without which men would ever grope in darkness here below, and would miss their goal. This divine legislation can have only three principles for its hypothesis: the existence of God, the revelation of His will, and a just recompense beyond death. These are the three pillars upon which it rests, and it needs no others.

Judaism, according to Albo, is a divine institution, and is the means of bringing life eternal to its adherents. It contains so many religious commandments, the usually accepted six hundred and thirteen, in order to enable each and every individual to further the salvation of his soul; for even a single commandment, fulfilled with single-heartedness and without reservation leads to eternal life. Accordingly, the Torah with its multiplicity of duties does not impose a burden upon its adherents, and does not, as Christian teachers assert, place the Jews under the curse of the law, but, on the contrary, facilitates the attainment of the higher perfection.

Albo discusses also the question of the mutability of the Sinaic revelation, or Judaism. This question demanded a careful investigation, particularly so because the representatives of Christianity taunted the Jews with the assertion that "the New

Covenant" had supplanted the "Old Covenant," that the Torah was abrogated by the gospels. Albo concludes that whatever had once been revealed by God *Himself* and *directly* must, by that very circumstance, remain immutable and binding for all time; on the other hand, what had been imparted through the medium of a prophet is subject to change and even to abrogation. The Decalog which Israel had received directly and from God's own mouth on flaming Sinai, and which contains the three cardinal principles of a divine legislation are immutable. The other religious prescriptions of Judaism that were announced through Moses might be changed or even abrogated. But the immutability of a part or the largest part of the religious laws of Judaism is admitted only theoretically, as a possibility. In practice, on the other hand, the religious duties demanded by the Torah are to be regarded as unchangeable and binding until such a time when it should again please God to reveal other laws and through so great a prophet as Moses and in such public and convincing a manner as He did on Sinai.

Albo's religious system is far from satisfactory. With the foreign, Christian doctrine of salvation as its basic principle, it had also, like Christianity, to regard faith as the main condition of salvation and to treat the commandments of Judaism as sacraments, as Christianity did baptism and the eucharist, upon the application of which salvation depended. Albo could not shake off the influence of the ideas that were current in his day. Even the cabala is assigned by him an honorable place in Judaism, and he even quotes the Zohar.

Albo's younger contemporary, Joseph ibn Shem-Tob was a deeper thinker, though he, too, was a preacher. Probably to the chagrin of his cabalistic, fanatic father, he absorbed himself with his whole soul in the Aristotelian-Maimonistic teaching. In contrast to his father, he maintained that a knowledge of philosophy was requisite for the attainment of man's and particularly of the Jew's high destiny. The philosophically educated Jew who fulfills the religious duties of Judaism conscientiously stands on a higher plane than he who practices them merely in a mechanical manner. According to Joseph ibn Shem-Tob, the Law of Sinai supplements philosophy, and is infinitely superior to it since Judaism places man's felicity in the immortality of the soul, and provides the means for the attainment of immortality in a conscientious fulfillment of religious duties. Like Albo, Joseph ibn Shem-Tob, too, regards the commandments of Judaism as sacraments, but he does not emphasize salavation as much as the former did. Shem-Tob went so far as to deny that the religious commandments have a knowable purpose at all, and he attaches to them a mystic efficacy to some extent. All the literary productions of the first half of the Fifteenth Century, the philosophic as well as the polemic, were the fruit not of leisure and choice but of sheer necessity; their object was to protect the religious and moral acquisitions of the Jewish people from imminent danger. Judaism had to recruit its inner strength and to ward off unseemly attacks if it was not to succumb.

It was then more than ever necessary for Judaism to be fully armed. A severe struggle and still greater dangers, evoked by Jewish apostates, awaited Jewry in the Pyrenean Peninsula. Conscienceless neophytes who had achieved high offices and dignities, and who hated Jews and Judaism more bitterly than born Christians, looked on with sullen anger upon the partial restoration to favor of the Castilian Jews, through the influence of the chancellor Alvaro de Luna, and could not bear to see prominent Jews like Abraham Benveniste, Joseph ibn Shem-Tob and Joseph Nassi having access to the court and being treated with consideration as in the happy days of old, Jewish physicians consulted by Christians, Jews entrusted with the administration of the finances, and intercourse between Jews and Christians resumed. The sons of Paul de Santa Maria in particular were exasperated at this favorable turn of affairs. For out of the serpent's root came forth a basilisk. The father had transmitted his ambition, his shrewdness, his spirit of intrigue as well as his hatred of Jews to his four sons; and these sons, together with their uncles and cousins, usually called Cartagena, possessed considerable power by virtue of their talents and position. The oldest son, Gonzalo de Cartagena, inherited the bishopric of Burgos, and was sent as an envoy to the councils of Constance and Burgos. The second, Alfonso de Cartagena, was dean of Santiago and Segovia. The third, Pedro, was admitted into the high nobility of the royal guard and achieved military distinction; and the youngest, Alvar Sanchez, enjoyed great authority as an eminent judge. Their uncles, Pedro Suarez and Alvar Garcia, who had accepted baptism simultaneously with their father, likewise occupied influential offices.

This clique that thoroughly hated the chancellor Alvaro de Luna because he had put an effective stop to their political agitations against Don Juan, now hated him doubly because of his favorable attitude towards the Jews, and attempted more than once to bring about his fall. Unable to accomplish the proscription of the Jews at home, they incited the Council of Basle to carry it into execution. The Council of Basle that sat for thirteen years (June, 1431-May, 1443) and that passed judgment upon the great European questions occupied itself with the Jewish question, too. To strengthen the Christian faith the Jews must be humiliated. Accordingly the old canonical decrees were renewed. Christians must avoid all intercourse with Jews, must render them no service, must employ no Jewish phyisician. Jews must be admitted to no office or dignity, must wear a distinctive garb, and must be compelled to live in exclusive quarters. In addition the Council of Basle decreed that Jews must not be admitted to any University degree, that they be forced to listen to missionary sermons, and that Hebrew, Chaldaic and Arabic be taught in the academies as a means for the conversion of Jews. The ecumenical council that claimed to be pervaded by the Holy Ghost accepted bodily the bull of Pope Benedict who died as an anathematized heretic. The already baptized Jews, too, received particular attention at the hands of the Council of Basle. They were to be favored on the one hand, and, watched on the other, that they did not marry among one another. The introduction of the Jewish question in this council was largely the work of Gonsalo and Alfonso de Cartegena who were appointed delegates by King Don Juan II. Alfonso de Cartagena, regarded an authority on theology and jurisprudence, exerted a great influence upon the council, and, together with his brother, was responsible for the odious enactments that were applicable solely to Spanish conditions. German Jews at that time did not seek professorships at universities, and they had no suspicions that the proscriptions in which they became involved were intended solely for their Spanish brethen.

In consequence of the general proscription decreed by the council, the hostility to the Jews increased ever more and more, and reached its culmination at the end of the Fifteenth Century. Even those Jews who lived at a distance from the historic scenes of action and who hitherto escaped the persecutions of the Church were to feel its fury most keenly. In Germany, the death of Emperor Sigismund (1437) just at the time when the Council of Basle was casting sinister eyes upon them, proved a calamity for the Jews. Even though Sigismund was not their reliable protector, and frequently extorted money from them, he did not tolerate indiscriminate massacres of Jews in so far as he was able to prevent them. But his successor, the Austrian duke Albrecht, was a mortal enemy of Jews and heretics. He could not, to be sure, exterminate either; the Hussites possessed good weapons and courage, and the Jews were an indispensable source of revenue. But emperor Albrecht II gladly gave his consent to any injustice contemplated against them. When the authorities of Augsburg decided to expel the Jewish community (1439), he gave his approval to the scheme most heartily. The Jews of Augsburg were given two years within which to dispose of their landed property; at the expiration of this period they were expelled in a body, and the tombstones of the Jewish cemetery were used as material for the repair of the city walls. Fortunately for the Jews, Albrecht reigned only two years, and was succeeded by the kindly, feeble and pliable Frederick III who had the best intentions to protect the Jews, when a new, bitter and inexorable foe arose against them in the person of the Franciscan John de Capistrano, a veritable cut-throat in the guise of a humble servant of God.

Pope Eugenius, who was deposed by the Council of Basle but who finally triumphed over the Council through the treachery of several leaders, was at first rather friendly to the Jews. At the beginning of his pontificate he confirmed the favorable privileges conferred upon the Jews by his predecessor, Martin V, promised them protection, and interdicted forcible baptism and violence against them. But he soon changed his attitude, probably at the instance of Alfonso de Cartagena, bishop of Burgos, who had ardently embraced the cause of Eugenius at the Council of Basle, and thereby gained the affection of the pope who styled him "the joy of Spain and the glory of the prelates." The pope addressed a letter to the bishops of Castile and Leon (August 10, 1442) to the effect that inasmuch as he had been informed that the Jews had abused their privileges to the detriment of the faithful and had committed disgraceful acts that defiled the purity of religion, he saw himself compelled to revoke and annul all the privileges hitherto conferred upon them. Eugenius thereupon renewed all the odious commercial restrictions contained in the bull of Pope Benedict that had been permitted to fall into desuetude under Don Juan II.

This papal brief, published in many Castilian cities without the king's knowledge, was in reality an attack upon Alvaro de Luna, the patron of the Jews, and the latter resented it. To counteract the effect of this brief, he issued a statement in the name of the king (Pragmatica, April 6, 1443) to the effect that, in accordance with the canonical and the royal law, Jews were permitted to live among Christians, a tolerance that Pope Eugenius himself had granted. The king had therefore learned with displeasure that, in several cities, some impudent men dared inflict violence upon the Jews on the pretext that they were an outlawed class. Even if the canonical laws demand that Jews occupy no high offices and that Christians have no intimate intercourse with the Jews, one is not to infer that Jews are denied the right to occupy even minor offices, or that all intercourse with them is prohibited. They do not forbid Christians to tend to Jewish flocks, or till Jewish fields, or trade with Jews. In conclusion the statement forbids subjects to promulgate laws or commands to the disadvantage of the Jews, on pain of severe punishment, without the knowledge of the king; and expresses the hope of obtaining from the pope a declaration that was to define clearly and distinctly what is and what is not permitted in the mutual relation between Jews and Christians. It was a clever move on Alvara de Luna's part against the schemes of the New-Christian foes of the Jews.

The hostility between this powerful favorite of the king and the influential New-Christians grew apace. The latter, in conjunction with the infant of Aragon, sought the life of the former. But they were soon to learn that they, too, needed a protector. Many of them who had achieved positions of eminence and dignity or had acquired wealth demeaned themselves, after the manner of upstarts, with so much haughtiness and arrogance that they excited the jealousy and indignation of the born Christians. This ill-feeling manifested itself first in Toledo and gave rise to a disturbance in the course of which several prominent converts were killed and hanged on the gallows (1449). Alvaro and the king made a show of moving upon Toledo in order to punish the ringleaders, but withdrew soon, and did nothing to check the fury of the born Christians. Encouraged thereby, the nobles of Toledo adopted a law that no New-Christian be henceforth eligible to any office, civil or ecclesiastic. Thus the New-Christians were as stigmatized as the Jews. In addition, Alvaro de Luna concocted a scheme against them that was destined to render the life of their descendants a hell upon earth. At his instance, the king addressed a letter to Pope Nicholas V (1451) in which he complained that many New-Christians, priests and laymen, monks and nuns, were observing Jewish customs in secret, were faithless to the Christian faith—a circumstance that reflected disgrace upon the Church. Indignant at such occurrences, the pope addressed a brief to the bishop of Osma and to the Dominican professors of the University of Salamanca (1451) to institute an inquisition against the Maranos suspected of Judaizing. This inquisition was given full power to summon before it persons of all ranks, even those who occupied the office of a bishop, to examine them, and, if found guilty, to confiscate their property, divest the ecclesiastics of their dignity, and deliver them over to the civil authorities for capital punishment.

Alvaro de Luna thus had his New-Christian enemies in his power, and could easily destroy them. It needed only specious proofs that they practiced Jewish rites in secret—and they were lost. This was the first impulse set in motion against the Spanish Maranos by the inquisition that, within a generation condemned them to a horrible fate such as had never befallen any people or caste. The wrath of the influential Maranos against Alvaro de Luna grew all the more violent and implacable, and they did not rest until they effected his fall, imprisonment and death on the scaffold. Among the members of the tribunal summoned by Don Juan to judge him there were several Maranos, and one of them, Fernando Diaz de Toledo, it was who pronounced the sentence that condemned the formidable chancellor to the scaffold with the loss of all his possessions (1453).

The death of Alvaro proved a great misfortune to the Jews of Castile. They were henceforth deprived of a powerful protector at a time when attacks were made upon them from many sides, and when they became involved in the tragic fate de-signed against the Maranos. Their chief enemy was the papacy that became powerful again and that made hostility to Jews a part of the Catholic creed, as it were.

Eugenius' successor, Pope Nicholas V, continued the system of humiliating and enslaving the Jews. He revoked the privileges of the Italian Jews which Martin V had confirmed and which Eugenius had not formally abrogated. In a bull which he issued he imposed the same restrictions upon the Jews of Italy which his predecessor had imposed upon the Jews of Castile, denying them even the permission to employ a Christian for kindling a fire in Jewish houses on the Sabbath. Nicholas' bull had a greater significance, because in it he appointed as its executor John de Capitrano, the murderer of Jews and heretics, who was charged with watching over its punctual enforcements whether in person or through his fellow Franciscans, and with punishing the violators thereof. Should a Jewish physician, for instance, prescribe for a Christian patient the monk had authority to confiscate all his property, and this saint with a heart of stone was the very man who would punish such a crime with relentless severity.

The systematic Jew-hatred that animated the Council of Basle and the popes infected other countries also. The Bavarian Duke of Landshut, Louis the Rich, styled a "foe of wild beasts and Jews," who was as savage as he was orthodox, had all the Jews of his land seized on a given day (1450), put the men in prison, shut the women up in the synagogs, and confiscated all their cash money and valuables. Christian debtors were told to pay their Jewish creditors only the principal, and to deduct from that whatever of interest they had paid on their debts. After an imprisonment of four weeks, the Jews were compelled to pay the duke a ransom of thirty thousand gulden, and were then expelled bereft of everything and almost naked. He would have treated similarly the rich and large community of Ratisbon that was under his dominion; but his authority over that city was limited, and, as the Jews of that city stood, as citizens, under the protection and the jurisdiction of the magistrates, he had to content himself with an extortion of money. Many Jews, it is said, driven by fear and anxiety, embraced Christianity on that occasion.

The heartlessness of the anti-Jewish canonical laws was based unconsciously upon a sort of fear. The all-powerful Church feared the influence of the Jewish spirit upon the Christian population in case of intimate intercourse between Jews and Christians. What the papacy concealed in the cloud of smoke of its official decrees was betrayed by a cardinal who stood close to the papacy. Nicholas of Cusa, the last offshoot of the scholastic philosophy and somewhat of a mystic, dreamed in the midst of the dissensions and the disruptions of Christianity of paving the way for a union of all religions into one faith. He was willing to sacrifice the ceremonies of the Church and even to accept circumcision if the non-Christian nations would, in turn, accept the trinity. But he feared, as he stated expressly, the stubbornness of the Jews who clung to the unity of God; he consoled himself, however, by the reflection that such a helpless handful would be unable to disturb the peace of the world. This cardinal was sent by the pope as a legate to Germany in order to bring about some reformations in the corrupt life of the priests, the monks and the nuns (1450-51). But Cusanus occupied himself also with the Jews. In the provincial council of Bamberg he took pains to emphasize the canonical law with reference to the Jewish badge, that the men must wear a red, round mark on their chest, and the women a blue stripe on their headgear, as though this stigmatization of the Jews would cure the priests, the monks and the laity infected by them of their indecencies. The separation of the Jews from the Christians only tended to keep the former from the contaminating vices of the latter. Cardinal Cusanus, too, failed in his efforts to purify the clergy or to put a stop to the fraud in connection with the bleeding of pierced hosts and the miraculous virtue of sacred images. The Church remained rotten to the core. The Jews were to be feared indeed if they were in a position to touch the festering sores with their fingers.

What a folly it was, then, to add new Jewish converts to the thousands upon thousands of Maranos whose keen eyes could not help seeing the rottenness of the Church! This, however, was the mission of the Franciscan monk Capistrano, who inflicted deep wounds upon the Jews of many lands. This emaciated and ugly mendicant monk possessed an insinuating voice and a strong will power that enabled him to touch, fascinate, enrapture and frighten into piety and move to cruel deeds not only the besotted mob but even the upper classes. As in the case of the Spanish Dominican Vicente Ferrer, the secret of Capistrano's wonderful power consisted not so much in his charming eloquence as in the modulation of his voice and in his unswerving superstition. He himself believed implicitly that with the blood he collected from the nose of his teacher Bernardinus of Siena and with his cowl he possessed the power to cure the sick, to revive the dead, and to perform miracles of all sorts, and the superstitious population not only believed in his miraculous powers but even exaggerated them. His severely ascetic life, his hatred of luxury, pleasure and riotous living made all the deeper impression because it presented a striking contrast to the voluptuous and lascivious life of the other priests and monks. Wherever Capistrano appeared, thousands of people assembled to be thrilled by his sermons even though they did not understand a single word of his Latin addresses. The shrewd popes, Eugenius IV and Nicholas V, utilized him as a serviceable tool to restore the shattered authority of the papal see. They sent him everywhere to preach the infallibility of the popes and the annihilation of heretics, and they raised no objections even to his fulminations against innocent pleasures and amusements, since he did not interfere with their own enjoyments. His stirring sermons against heretics and Turks, his capucinades against luxury and amusements usually contained violent references to the Jews, their unbelief and usury. Queen Johanna of Naples had ere this appointed him inquisitor-in-chief over the Jews, and had given him authority to impose the severest punishments upon them if they violated any of the canonical laws or failed to wear the Jewish badge, the sign of Thau (death), on their garments.

The arrival of this fanatic monk in Germany spread terror and consternation among the Jews. They trembled at the mere mention of his name. In Bavaria, Silesia, Moravia and Austria Capistrano's presence heightened the excitement of the Catholics that prevailed there as a result of the animosity between them and the Hussites, and since they could not overcome the heretics of Bohemia they vented their fury upon the Jews. The Bavarian dukes, Louis and Albrecht, who had ere this expelled the Jews from their domains, became still more fanaticized by Capistrano. The former called upon several counts and the city of Ratisbon to expel their Jews. The burgomaster and the magistrate of that city refused to deprive their

Jewish fellow citizens of the rights of citizenship which they had enjoyed from time immemorial, but yielded sufficiently to Capistrano's fanaticism to include a paragraph in the ordinance governing midwives adopted that year, that forbade Christian midwives, at their peril, to assist Jewish women at childbirth, even in cases involving life and death.

The change of attitude toward the Jews as a result of Capistrano's crusade is seen most strikingly in the treatment they received at the hands of an ecclesiastic prince before and after the capuchin's appearance in Germany. Bishop Godfrey of Würzburg, who was also duke of Franconia, had granted the Jews of his duchy an unusually favorable charter, in which he promised special protection to the Jewish residents, present and future. Differences among Jews were to be settled not by the civil or ecclesiastic tribunals but by Jewish courts. The rabbis of Würzburg were to be exempt from taxation, and were given the right to keep as many students as they pleased in their academy. He guaranteed the Jews freedom of location, and promised to assist those who desired to leave the country in collecting their debts. The dean and the entire chapter acknowledged these privileges, and guaranteed them for themselves and their successors in the chapter. Every Jew who immigrated into his territory was provided with a special charter by Bishop Godfrey. But a few days later, after Capistrano's appearance, the same bishop ordered the expulsion of all the Jews from his domain "because of the serious charges brought against the Jews by subjects of his bishopric" (1453). They were to dispose of their landed possessions within the period terminating in January of the following year, and were to emigrate two weeks later, "for he will no longer tolerate Jews in his bishopric." A similar order was directed to all cities, counts, lords and judges. The claims of Jewish creditors were to be paid only in part.

In Silesia in particular Capistrano proved himself a veritable "scourge of the Hebrews," as his admirers styled him. In this province, belonging partly to Poland and partly to Bohemia, there were two important communities—one in Breslau and one in Schweidnitz. At the invitation of Bishop Peter Nowak of Breslau, who could not control his clergy, Capistrano came to the Silesian capital. Within the church, barred against all laymen, the Franciscan friar rebuked the clergy for their immoral life. But he was more concerned with the destruction of the Hussites who were found in Silesia too and with the persecution of the Jews than with the moral improvement of the clergy. The Jews were the first victims of the insane fanaticism aroused by Capistrano's sermons among the people of Breslau.

A rumor spread that a wealthy Jew of Breslau named Meyer, to whom many burghers and nobles were in debt and who held their promissory notes, had bought a host from a peasant, pierced and desecrated it, and sent a portion of it to the communities of Schweidnitz, Leignitz and other cities for similar desecration. As a matter of course, the wounded host bled! This silly tale found credence at once. Thereupon all the Jews of Breslau were imprisoned, all their possessions confiscated, and, what concerned the originators of this rumor most, promissory notes to the amount of twenty-five thousand Hungarian gold florins were taken from the creditors (1453). The flight of some of the unfortunates who, however, were caught served as proof positive of their guilt. Capistrano, as an inquisitor, conducted the trial in person. At his direction several Jews were placed under torture and confessed the crime of the desecration of the host.

Meanwhile, another infamous lie was circulated. A malicious baptized Jewess stated that the Jews of Breslau had burned a host once before, and, on another occasion, had fattened a stolen Christian boy, placed him in a barrel that had pointed nails inside, and rolled it until the boy died. The Jews had sent some of his blood to other Silesian communities. The bones of the murdered boy were found. The guilt of the Jews was established. The Jews of several communities were seized and brought to Breslau, three hundred and eighteen all told. Capistrano sat in judgment over them, and forty-one Jews whom he pronounced guilty were burned in front of his residence at the Salzring (June 2, 1453). The rabbi Phinehas hanged himself, after advising others to commit suicide. The others were expelled from Breslau, their children under the age of seven having been torn from them, baptized, and sent to cloisters. In a learned treatise addressed to King Ladislaus Capistrano boasted and proved that he acted in accordance with Christianity and orthodoxy. The honest town clerk Eschenloer, who dared not protest against this inhumanity, wrote in his diary: "Whether this is divine or not, I leave to the knowledge of the spiritual teachers." But the spiritual teachers were transformed into cannibals. The property of the burned and expelled Jews was sold, and with the proceeds the church of St. Bernardine was erected. Nor was this the only church erected with Jewish blood. In the other Silesian cities the Jews fared no better. Many of them were burned, and the rest expelled with the loss of all their property. When the youthful King Ladislaus was requested by the magistrates of Breslau to issue a law forbidding Jews to settle in that city in the future, he not only approved their request "for the glory of God and the honor of the Christian faith," but sanctioned also the murder of the Silesian Jews with the remark "that they suffered in accordance with their deserts," a remark worthy of a son of Albrecht II, who had ordered the burning of Jews in Austria. Ladislaus undoubtedly at the instance of Capistrano, who tarried several months in Olmütz, gave his approval also to the expulsion of the Jews from Olmütz and Brünn. Capistrano's baneful influence extended as far as Poland and disturbed the peace that the Jewish communities had enjoyed there for centuries. For a long time Poland had become the place of refuge for the Jews who had been banished from Germany, Austria and Hungary. The favorable privileges they had obtained from Duke Boleslaw and which Casimir the Great had renewed and confirmed, were still in force. In that country the Jews represented the missing middle class, supplied merchandise and ready money, and brought uninvested capital into circulation.

When Casimir IV, shortly after his accession (Aug 3, 1447) arrived in Posen, a conflagration broke out which reduced that city to ashes. In this fire the charter of the privileges which Casimir the Great had granted the Jews a century before was lost. In response to an appeal made to him by Jewish deputies who represented many Polish communities for a renewal of their former charter, King Casimir, who was no tool of the Church and who did not permit the clergy to interfere in matters of state, conferred upon his Jewish subjects even more important privileges than they had formerly enjoyed (Cracow, Aug. 14, 1447). Casimir's statute annulled all the canonical laws. Jews were not to be summoned before a Christian tribunal, and must not obey it if summoned. The palatines of the provinces were to give the Jews effective protection, and see to it that they be not annoyed by the clergy. No Jew was to be accused of using

Christian blood for ritual purposes or of desecrating the host, "because Jews are innocent of such crimes which are contrary to their religion." Should a Christian prefer such a charge against a Jew, he must prove it by the testimony of resident, trustworthy Jewish and four reliable Christian witnesses, and in such a case punishment is to be inflicted only upon the individual Jew who had committed the crime without involving all his coreligionists. If the Christian accuser is unable to prove his charge, he is to receive the death penalty. In this way an effective stop was to be put to malicious accusations that usually resulted in Jewish massacres. Casimir also recognized the independence of Jewish courts. Criminal cases, involving Jews alone or Jews and Christians, were to be judged not by the ordinary courts, but by the palatine or his representative in conjunction with Jewish judges. Minor offences were to be judged entirely by the Jewish elders (rabbis), who were given authority to fine those who disobeyed their summons. These privileges, such as the Jew of no other Christian country of Europe enjoyed, were granted by the king with the approval of the Polish magnates. Casimir conferred special privileges also (1446) upon the Karaites who had settled in Troki, Lutzk and other cities in the thirteenth century under Grand Duke Witold of Lithuania.

But the clergy, with Zbigniew Olesnitzki, the influential bishop and cardinal of Cracow at their head, looked with envious eyes upon the Jewish privileges, and exerted themselves to induce the king to revoke them. To enable him to proceed effectively against the Hussites of Poland, the bishop urged upon Capistrano to come to Poland. Capistrano came and was received in Cracow in triumph by the king and the clergy. All the while he tarried in Cracow (Aug., 1453-May, 1454) the monk, in common with Bishop Zbigniew, incited the king against the Hussites as well as against the Jews. Capistrano rebuked him openly, threatened him with damnation, and prophesied that he would meet with disaster in the war against the Teutonic Knights if he did not revoke the Jewish privileges and did not deliver the Hussites into the hands of the clergy. A defeat at the hands of the Teutonic Knights could easily be foretold, since the pope and even the Polish clergy were secretly supporting the former against the king. And when the Polish army was actually put to flight and the humiliated Casimir was forced to retreat (Sept., 1454), the clergy, ascribing the defeat of Poland to the king's sinfulness in favoring the Jews and heretics, carried the day. To be able to wipe off the disgrace of the defeat and to lead another army against the Prussians, the king needed the assistance of Bishop Zbigniew, and the latter was in a position to dictate terms. The Jews were the first victims. Casimir recalled all their privileges (Nov., 1454), "since the infidels must not receive preference to the worshippers of Christ, and the slaves to the sons." The revocation of the privileges was proclaimed throughout the country by public criers. Capistrano was victorious all along the line; through his influence the Jews of happy Poland were to share the humiliation of their coreligionists of the other European Christian countries.

* The immediate effect of this incident was to incite the mob to acts of violence against the Jews. On its way to Belgrade, the rabble that followed Capistrano in the crusade against the Turks fell upon the Jews of Cracow, robbed and plundered them, killed thirty men, and maimed many others (1455), and would have wrought greater havoc

had not the authorities come to the rescue of the Jews. In Lemberg, Galicia, the crusaders threatened to set fire to the city if the authorities did not surrender the Jews to them, but were bought off with money and provisions. When a fire originating in the Jewish quarter broke out in Posen a second time (1468) and reduced the adjoining part of the city to ashes, the mob fell upon the Jews, plundered their houses and killed many of them. It is almost certain, though, that after the death of Zbigniew (April 1, 1455) and Capistrano (1456), Casimir restored the Jewish privileges, and the Jews lived in peace to the end of his reign (1492). The fact that under Casimir IV the study of the Talmud began to flourish in Poland, notably in Posen and Lemberg, and that the most distinguished German rabbi, Moses Minz, consented to accept the rabbinate of Posen even before 1474, would indicate that the Polish Jews occupied a favorable position during the latter years of Casimir's reign.

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* This paragraph is abridged from Rabinonitz's Hebrew translation, Vol. VI, pp. 228-30.

Meanwhile a heavy judgment was visited upon Christendom. The Byzantine empire that maintained itself in a decadent state for centuries finally disappeared from the stage of history, after an existence of a thousand years, with the fall of Constantinople (May 29, 1453). The Turkish conqueror, Mohammed II, subjected New Rome to slavery, degradation, death, terror and torture, but yet did not requite her in the least for the crimes she had committed against others and against herself. From Constantine, the founder of the Byzantine empire, who had placed a blood-stained sword in the hands of the Church, to the last emperor, Constantine Dragosses, there was a long succession of rulers (with the exception of Julian the Apostate) who were animated more or less by self-deifying arrogance, dissimulation, mendacity and a spirit of persecution. And the people as well as the serants of the state and of the Church were worthy of their rulers. From them the Germanic, Latin and Slavic peoples and the representatives of the Church borrowed the principle that the Jews must be degraded or destroyed altogether. Now, Byzantine, the new creation of the first Christian emperor, lay in ruins, and wild barbarians founded a new empire upon its ashes. Mohammed II, the conquerer of Constantinople, turned his eyes also to the rest of Europe, to the countries of the Latin Church. All Christendom was in imminent danger. And yet the Christian rulers and nations could not rouse themselves to an energetic war against the Turkish conqueror. The mendacity and the corruption of the papacy now bore bitter fruit. When the faithless Pope Nicholas V appealed to Christendom for a general crusade against the Turks, his legates at the imperial diet of Ratisbon were told that the pope and the emperor were aiming not at making war upon Turkey but solely at squandering the money collected for that purpose. In vain did Capistrano preach himself hoarse in an effort to create enthusiasm for a crusade when the Turks made preparations to fall upon Hungary. His capucinades attracted no longer, and only a promiscuous army of students, peasants, mendicant friars and riff-raff followed his standard. The spectre of medievalism began to vanish at the approach of dawn. It seemed almost an intervention of Providence that, when the violence of Jewish persecutions was at its height in Europe, the new Turkish empire arose that offered a hospitable asylum to the hounded Jews. When the Sultan Mohammed II, three days after the capture of Constantinople, issued a proclamation that all who were hiding and all fugitives might return to their homes and their possessions without fear of molestation, he treated the Jews also with favor. He granted them the right to settle in Constantinople and in the other cities, assigned them a special district in which to live, and permitted them to establish synagogs and academies. Just as, after taking possession of Constantinople, he ordered the election of a Greek patriarch whom he appointed the political head, as it were, of all the Greeks of his new empire, so he appointed a Jewish chief rabbi for all the Turkish communities in the person of a pious, learned and brave man named Moses Kapsali (about 1420-1495). Mohammed gave this chief rabbi a seat in the divan, and conferred special distinctions upon him so that he had his seat next to the mufti, and was given precedence over the patriarch. Moses Kapsali received from the sultan a sort of political sovereignty over the Turkish communities. He assessed the taxes which individual Turkish Jews or communities were expected to pay, saw to their collection, and delivered them into the sultan's treasury. He exercised also judicial authority over all members of the communities, and possessed the right to appoint rabbis. In a word, he was the chief and the official representative of a coherent Jewish commonwealth.

Even Karaism that had become thoroughly petrified revived in the Turkish empire when it came in contact with the Rabbinites. The Karaite communities of Constantinople and Adrianople received new accretions from the Crimea, Asia and Southern Poland. The Karaites, whose basic principle was the searching and rational interpretation of the Bible had fallen into such wretched ignorance that their entire religious structure rested, even more than that of the Rabbinites, upon the laws and traditions of older authorities. These Karaites who desired to acquire knowledge had to sit at the feet of the rabbinic teachers and learn the interpretation of the Scriptures from them. The petrifaction of Karaism is shown also by another incident in European Turkey. A Karaite college had introduced the innovation of permitting the lighting of candles on Friday before sunset so that the Karaites would not have to spend the Sabbath eve in darkness. According to the basic principle of Karaism, the right of abolishing an old custom or law is granted not only to an ecclesiastical court but also to each individual on the ground of a pertinent interpretation of a biblical verse. Nevertheless, there ensued a violent opposition to this innovation which led to dissensions and schisms (about 1460). Those who indulged in this innovation were condemned as heretics by the orthodox party. The dissensions among the Karaites over the beginning of festivals still continued at that time. The weakness of Karaism and the ignorance of its adherents gave the Rabbinites in the Turkish empire the opportunity of reconciling the former with Talmudic Judaism; or, at least, of inducing them to discontinue their animosity to it.

It is truly astonishing how the study of the Talmud in Germany under the most untoward circumstances, "under constant anxiety, trembling, annoyance and persecution," could have flourished again to such an extent that students from the most distant communities attended the academies of Erfurt, Nürnberg, Ratisbon and Prague, and that the rabbis educated there were generally acknowledged as the most able. Kapsali, likewise, received his rabbinic education in Germany. The keen Tosafistic method of hair-splitting analysis, connected with the thoroughness of the schools of Ramerupt, Sens and Paris revived again in Germany. The most eminent rabbis who again cultivated and transmitted this spirit were Jacob Weil (fl. about 1375-1455) and Israel Isserlein (about 1400-1460). Both were regarded in their generation, and more so later on, as absolute authorities. Both of these men took a decisive stand against the presumption of some rabbis who sought to overawe the communities by threatening to employ, like the Christian clergy, clerical force, and thus preserved communal freedom.

In contrast with the wretched condition of the Jews in Germany, their coreligionists of the new Turkish empire must have regarded themselves as living in paradise. Jews who emigrated from Germany into Turkey were filled with rapture at the happy condition of the Turkish Jews. No longer did they have to pay the "golden pence," special Jewish taxes, and a third of their possessions. Here they were free to engage in any commercial pursuit, their property was their own, and they could dress in any way they pleased. The rich empire afforded them a wide field for their commercial skill. Turkey was a country, as an enthusiast described it, "in which nothing was wanting." Two young German Jews who had come to Turkey remarked that if the German Jews knew but a tithe of the blessings that awaited them in the new empire they would brave all dangers in order to emigrate on a large scale. Isaac Zarfati, a native of Germany who had immigrated into Turkey and had achieved fame as a Talmudic scholar, therefore addressed a circular letter to the Jews of Suabia, the Rhine region, Steiermark, Moravia and Hungary, in which he described the favorable conditions of the Jews under the crescent in contrast with their yoke under the cross, in order to induce them to come to Turkey. Zarfati's call probably led many German Jews to emigrate into Palestine and Turkey. But the authorities of Christendom denied them even the liberty of seeking an asylum. Emigration was interdicted.

This interdict upon emigration to Palestine was the result of a peculiar circumstance. The Jewish inhabitants of Jerusalem had obtained permission from a pasha to erect a synagog on Mount Zion, on a site that abutted upon the property of the Franciscan Order that owned there a dilapidated chapel, called "David's Chapel." The monks complained bitterly about it, as though the Holy City had been their hereditary possession from time immemorial upon which the Jews had no claim. They appealed to the pope, and hinted that if the Jews were once given a foothold upon Mount Zion they would soon seize upon the Church of the Sepulchre. Thereupon the pope issued a bull prohibiting Christian ship owners from giving passage to Jews on ships bound for the Holy Land. As the navigation to the Levant was then largely in the hands of Venetians, the doge was induced to warn all captains not to give passage to Jews upon their ships bound for the Levant.

CHAPTER III

THE AGGRAVATED PERSECUTIONS OF JEWS AND MARANOS

(1455-1485)

The Spanish Jews, too, were soon to taste the bitter cup of affliction. Against them, too, bitter enemies arose on all sides. Outwardly, it is true, their condition seemed a favorable one under the reigns of the Castilian king Don Henry IV (1457-1474) and the Aragon ruler Don Juan II (1450-1479); but it was only the calm presaging a storm. Henry IV, even more indolent than his father, kindly and generous to the point of insane extravagance and not immoderately pious, paid little attention to the execution of the anti-Jewish canonical restrictions. Like his father, he turned the government over to an unscrupulous favorite, Juan de Pacheco, who, though himself a descendant of the Jewish family of Ruy Capon, annoyed the Jews when his selfish interests demanded it. For the most part, however, his selfish interests demanded that he be on good terms with the wealthy Jews, Don Joseph Benveniste and his sons Don Vidal and

Don Abraham, and these, like their ancestor, the chief rabbi under Juan II, labored assiduously for the material and spiritual welfare of their coreligionists.

Henry's minister of the royal palace, the equally conscienceless Diego Arias Davila, likewise of Jewish descent, appointed Jews as subordinate tax-farmers without any conscientious scruples whatever. In the last years of his reign, Don Henry appointed as chief rabbi Jacob ibn Nuñes, who was probably a favorite of his or his physician.

The King of Aragon, who was poorer than his nobles could still less afford to quarrel with the wealthy Jews of his domains. He was, besides, given to astrology, and was on friendly terms with Jewish astrologers, one of whom was the preacher Abraham Bibago. Don Juan, moreover, surrounded himself with Jewish physicians, among whom was Don Abiatar ibn Crescas ha-Kohen, who had cured the king of a cataract on both eyes. The Jews of Catalonia, at any rate, must have received much consideration at his hands, for upon his death several communities under the direction of the physician Ibn Crescas, assambled in mourners' garb to observe extraordinary funeral rites in his honor. Men and women, with torches in their hands, chanted Hebrew psalms, and sang Spanish dirges.

The example of the courts reacted upon the nobles, who, as a rule when their interests were not at stake, paid little attention to ecclesiastic laws. The practice of medicine was still in Jewish hands, and it opened for them the chambers and the hearts of the nobles. The papal bulls, it is true, forbade Christians to employ Jewish physicians. But there were but few Christians who understood medicine, and the sick had no other choice than to consult the Jews. Even the higher clergy ignored the bulls of Eugenius, Nicholas and Calixtus. They, too, loved their bodies too much to decline the medical assistance of a Jew on account of some canonical law.

But Jew-hatred that was strongly intrenched in the large cities gave the Jews no rest. It employed the same means that had already proved so effective in other countries: the charge of child murder. In one place it was said the Jews had torn the heart out of a Christian child in the neighborhood of Salamanca; in another city it was said that the Jews had cut pieces of flesh out of a Christian child. These charges aroused the fanaticism of the population; the judges stepped in and arrested those charged with the crimes. The king, who well knew the source and the object of such accusations, ordered a thorough investigation, and the innocence of the accused was established in every instance. Nevertheless, the enemies of the Jews insisted that the latter were guilty, charged the judges with having been bribed, or claimed that the New-Christians had exerted themselves in behalf of their former coreligionists, and that the king himself was prejudiced in their favor.

The most violent enemy of the Spanish Jews was a Franciscan monk, Alfonso de Spina, a friar of Salamanca. Alfonso de Spina enjoyed a certain fame from the circumstances that, as his father confessor, he had accompanied the almighty minister Alvaro de Luna to the place of execution. This priest fulminated against the Jews and their patrons first from the pulpit, but as his sermon did not seem to him to be effective enough, he wrote a venomous work in Latin against heretics, Jews and Mohammedans under the title of "The Fortress of Faith" (Fortalitium fidei, 1459)—a compilation of all the malicious charges and the most ridiculous tales ever made, written or told against the Jews, presented in as drastic a manner as possible. Heretics and Mohammedans were to be disposed of naturally by fire and sword. Jews were to receive a seemingly gentle treatment; only their young children should be taken from them by force and reared as Christians, a suggestion he borrowed from the scholastic Duns Scotus and from his fellow Franciscan Capistrano. Alfonso de Spina rebukes the king, the nobles and the clergy most sharply for treating the Jews kindly, and enlarges upon the tales of child murder and the desecration of hosts. A similarly venomous work was written by a Jewish apostate Pedro de la Caballeria, a member of the prominent Jewish family of Benveniste de la Caballeria. His work bore the title of "The Wrath of Christ against the Jews." These incitements led to tragic consequences. A monk, with the crucifix in his hands, called upon the Christians of Medina del Campo, a little town near Valladolid, to kill their Jewish neighbors, and his words met with ready response. All the Christians of the little town fell upon the Jews, burned several of them together with the sacred books they found, and plundered their possessions (1461).

Much as the Christians hated the Jews, they hated the Maranos even more violently because the more prominent among them had forced themselves into the higher civil and ecclesiastic offices, exerted an influence in the sessions of the Cortes, directed the policies of the councils of state, and wielded the ecclesiastic power of bishops. Alfonso de Spina directed his provocations against them, too, designating them collectively as secret Jews. This charge that all the New-Christians were practising the rites of Judaism in secret was a malicious and in all probability a conscious exaggeration. For the very ones who had forced themselves to the front were dead to Judaism, if not thoroughly hostile to it, and those Maranos who remained loyal to their ancestral faith in their hearts and in their practices kept quiet, glad to escape notice. But the enemies of the Maranos included them all in the accusation in order to arouse public opinion and to incite also the indolent King Henry IV against them. The monks of Salamanca obtained a bull from the pope authorizing them to institute an inquisition against the secret Jews and to punish the guilty with death, a weapon forged by Alvaro de Luna against his Marano enemies but hitherto unused. To induce the king to sanction the institution of an inquisition, the enemies of the Maranos selected an impetuous, fanatic preacher to fulminate against the perversities of the New-Christians, and to prefer the charge against them that many of them had subjected their newly born sons to circumcision. The excitement in Madrid against the Maranos was so great as a consequence that the king ordered a milder preacher to appease the wrath of the multitude. At any rate, the idea of establishing a tribunal for the purpose of inquiring into the orthodoxy or the infidelity of the New-Christians approached the point of realization. In Toledo, the antipathy to the Maranos assumed a violent form. More than one hundred and thirty of them were killed in the riots, those who defended themselves were hanged on the gallows, and six hundred houses inhabited by Maranos were set on fire and reduced to ashes.

The marriage of the Infanta Isabella of Spain with Don Fernand, Infant of Aragon, proved ominous for the Jews and Maranos. This marriage, disastrous alike for them and for the future of Spain, was, strange to say, furthered by Jews and Maranos themselves. The real heiress to the throne of Castile was Don Henry's daughter Johanna, but the king was forced to discard her on account of the stigma clinging to the illegitimacy of her birth in favor of his sister Isabella. Against her brother's wishes, and in violation of her promise to him to marry only with his consent, Isabella betrothed herself secretly to Fernand of Aragon, and was assisted in this affair by a very clever and wealthy Jew, Don Abraham Senior. Rumor had it that Fernand had Jewish blood in his veins. It was said that his great-grandfather Frederique Henriquez, admiral of Castile and of princely descent, had seduced a beautiful Jewess named Paloma, who gave birth to a son. Owing to his remarkable beauty and cleverness, this son was legitimatized by his father and later succeeded him in the admiralty. His daughter, Johanna Henriquez, became the second wife of King Don Juan II of Aragon and mother of Don Fernand. In the hope that the future king, mindful of the Jewish blood that flowed in his veins, would be kindly disposed to the Jews, Abraham Senior exerted himself to effect the secret meeting and the betrothal of Fernand and Isabella. A Marano, Don Pedro de la Caballeria the Younger, whose former Jewish name was Solomon, removed the obstacles to this union and delivered to Isabella a costly necklace and a large sum of money as a bridal gift. Don Abraham succeeded also in bringing about a reconciliation between the king and his sister, and Don Henry finally gave his consent to the marriage. In recognition of Abraham's services, Isabella conferred upon him a considerable annual stipend out of the royal treasury. This marriage, brought about with so much difficulty, proved the cause of unspeakable miseries for the Jews and Maranos.

As though the fanatics felt in their hearts that under the reign of this youthful pair the persecution of Jews and Maranos would be sanctioned and enacted into law, they manifested their hatred against them by fabricated accusations and savage riots. The Jews of the little town of Sepulveda, near Segovia, were accused of torturing to death a

Christian child in the Passion Week (1470) at the instance of their rabbi Solomon Pichon. Thereupon eight Jews were condemned to death by order of Bishop Juan Arias Davila, son of the New-Christian minister, Diego Arias Davila. The bishop may have been convinced of the innocence of the Jews, but as a descendant of Jews he dared not spare his race. The inhabitants of Sepulveda were not content with the punishment of eight but attacked the other Jews in their homes, killed most of them, and the fugitives found no mercy. This fiction of the torturing of a Christian child by Jews was widely circulated and believed in everywhere.

The hostility to the Maranos found expression in an even more violent form. In Cordova a holy brotherhood was organized (1473) with the Virgin as its patron, from which all New-Christians were excluded. At a solemn procession of this brotherhood the houses and the streets were decorated with festoons of flowers and with colored rugs. The fact that the Maranos shut their houses and refused to decorate them was interpreted as an expression of derision of the Virgin. It so happened, in addition, that a Marano girl had, during the procession, poured some water on the street and accidentally splashed the image of the Virgin. A rumor spread at once that the secret Jews had purposely poured an unclean liquid upon the Virgin. The houses of the Maranos were set on fire, many of them were killed, and the few survivors had to leave the city. Many other cities followed the example of Cordova.

The Jews of Spain, fully realizing that their condition would ere long become intolerable, turned their eyes to Italy and Turkey. In Italy, where the degeneracy of the papacy and the priesthood was best known, the evil designs of the Church exerted but little influence upon the population. The international commerce of the flourishing republics of Venice, Florence, Genoa and Pisa partly overcame religious narrowness and widened the horizon. The interests of the purse forced the interests of the Church into the background. Money and shrewdness were valued even when possessed by those who did not repeat the Catholic confession. Not alone the commercial classes but the nobles and petty princes as well needed money with which to hire condottieres with their mercenaries for the feuds that were renewed daily. The Jews as capitalists and shrewd advisers were therefore welcomed in Italy. When the city of Ravenna desired to join the Republic of Venice, it demanded, among other conditions, that wealthy Jews be sent there to open a loan office for the relief of the poorer residents.

For this reason the Jewish capitalists received in many Italian cities extensive privileges from the princes or the ruling senate to open banks and engage in financial operations. The archbishop of Mantua declared in the name of the pope (1476) that Jews are permitted to loan money on interest. A Jewish capitalist, Jehiel of Pisa, controlled the money market of Tuscany. Jehiel of Pisa was a man of noble impulses, ever ready to assist the poor with his means, a lover and a promoter of Hebrew literature, and conducted a friendly correspondence with the last Jewish statesman of Spain, Isaac Abrabanel. When Alfonso of Portugal captured the African ports of Arzilla and Tangiers and brought many Jews among the captives to Portugal, Abrabanel appealed to Jehiel of Pisa to raise funds among the Italian Jews to assist the Portuguese communities in ransoming the Jewish captives and in providing for them until they could find some means of livelihood. And Abrabanel's appeal was not in vain.

Italian Jews were in demand as physicians too.

Despite the existence of the ancient medical academy of Palermo, there were but few skilled Christian physicians and as even prelates, and they in particular, paid more attention to the preservation of the body than to the purification of the soul. Jewish physicians had easy access to the houses of the Italian nobles. A famous Jewish physician, Guglielmo (Benjamin) di Partaleoni of Mantua, was at first physician-in-ordinary to King Ferdinand of Naples and was knighted by him; he then entered the service of Galeazzo Sforza, duke of Milan, and finally of Duke Ludovico Gonzaga (1479), and founded a noble family that produced many famous physicians. The relations between Jews and Christians in Italy were very cordial. In the elaborate eight-day festivities instituted by Leo of Crema, a wealthy Jew, on the occasion of his son's wedding, many Christians participated, danced and made merry to the chagrin of the ecclesiastics. The bull but recently issued by Pope Nicholas V that severely interdicted all intercourse with Jews and the employment of Jewish physicians seemed to have been forgotten. Instead of the Jewish badges prescribed by the canonical laws, the Jewish physicians wore a robe of honor, a sort of official costume, like the Christian physicians, and the Jews who had access to the courts wore golden chains and other insignia. Two similar incidents occurring at the same time in Italy and in Germany may serve to illustrate the comparative position of the Italian Jews and those of other countries. In Pavia, a Jewish woman who was dissatisfied with her husband, announced her intention of embracing Christianity. She was already in a convent where she was to be prepared for baptism when she repented. The bishop of Pavia not only refused to punish her and to prevent her return to her ancestral faith, but even appealed to her husband to remove her from the convent as soon as possible and testified to the purity of her conduct while in the convent in order that her husband, who was of a priestly descent, should not be required to divorce her in accordance with Jewish law. In the same year, in Ratisbon, a precentor named Kalmann entertained the idea of embracing Christianity. He frequented the cloisters and the Church, and was taken into the house of the suffragan and instructed in the elements of Christianity. To find favor in the eyes of the Christians, he denounced his coreligionists as possessing books that contained blasphemies against Christianity. But Kalmann, too, repented of his step afterward, visited the synagog again secretly, left the suffragan's house during his absence, and finally returned to Judaism. The clergy of Ratisbon flew into a violent rage against him, and accused him of blaspheming the Church, God and the Virgin. Thereupon, Kalmann was condemned to death and drowned.

Wherever the Jews were allowed to breathe freely, their dormant intellectual energies were awakened, and this was true of the Italian Jews in particular, who had already reached a higher degree of culture before, in the days of Immanuel the Roman and Leone Romano. For this reason they took an active part in the intellectual awakening and in the rejuvenescence of science that so glorified the age of the Medici. Jewish youth attended the Italian universities, and acquired a higher education. The Italian Jews were the first to take advantage of Gutenberg's invention, and printing presses were soon established in many cities of Italy, in Reggio, Mantua, Ferrara, Pieva di Sacco, Bologna, Soncino, Ischia and Naples. It is true that in the arts of painting and sculpture the Jews had no share at all; these were beyond their province; but several educated Jews did contribute to the advancement and the diffusion of science in Italy. Preëminent among these were Messer Leon and Elijah del Medigo.

Messer Leon (Judah ben Jehiel) of Naples (about 1450-1490) was both rabbi and physician in Mantua, was familiar with the Latin literature in addition to the Hebrew, and was able to appreciate the stylistic niceties of Cicero and Quintilian. Belonging to the Aristotelian school, he eludicated several works of this philosopher who was so venerated in the synagog and in the Church, and wrote a treatise on grammar and logic in Hebrew. Of greater significance was his Hebrew rhetoric (Nofet Zufim), in which Messer Leon analyzes the principles upon which the beauty, impressiveness and effectiveness of eloquence are based, and proves that the same laws underlie the Scriptures also. He was the first Jew who ventured to institute a comparison between the language of the Psalms and the prophets and that of Cicero, a bold act in those days when both Jews and Christians regarded the Holy Scriptures in so transcendental a light that their mere comparison with a pagan literature was looked upon as a sort of blasphemy. Messer Leon, the cultured rabbi of Mantua, was generally liberal, and rebuked the zealots for keeping foreign influences away from Judaism as though the latter would be defiled by them.

Elijah del Medigo, or Elijah Cretensis (1463-1498), a member of a German family that settled in Crete, was a significant phenomenon, the first genius produced by Italian Jewry. He was a clear thinker who stands out resplendent in the midst of his age, a man of many-sided and profound knowledge, of classic and philosophic culture. The Latin style became a part of him to such an extent that he not only was able to write that language fluently but that he employed Latin constructions even when writing Hebrew. Holding aloof from the vagaries of neo-Platonism reintroduced by Ficinus Marselius, he made the Christian thinkers of Italy acquainted with the customs of the Greek, Jewish and Arabic philosophers, both by word of mouth and by his literary works—translations and independent researches. The boy prodigy of his age, Count Giovanni Pico di Mirandola, became his disciple, friend and protector. He learned from his Jewish friend not only Hebrew but also the Aristotelian Arabic philosophy. He could have learned from him lucidity of thought, too.

On one occasion, when a learned controversy that broke out in the University of Padua split its professors and students into two hostile groups that were ready to settle the question by means of the sword, after the Christian fashion, the university, with the consent of the Venetian Senate that was anxious to put a stop to the dissensions, invited Elijah del Medigo to act as arbiter. From his great learning a final as well as an impartial decision was expected. Del Medigo discussed the theme publicly in Padua and decided in favor of one party. As a result of this incident, he became a public teacher of philosophy and delivered lectures before large audiences in Padua and in Florence. Strange enough, under the eyes of the papacy that exerted itself to humiliate and enslave the Jews, Christian youths imbibed wisdom from the lips of a Jewish teacher. In Spain the papacy hurled its anathemas against the friends of the Jews, and in Italy it had to look on at the favors conferred upon the Jews by the Christians.

Pico di Mirandola, more of a scholar than a thinker, conceived a desire to familiarize himself with the mystic teachings of the cabala, and he obtained the services of Johanan Aleman, a Jew who had immigrated into Italy from Constantinople, who initiated him into the cabalistic mysteries and who, mentally unbalanced himself, led his disciple to believe that the cabala was of very ancient origin and contained the profoundest wisdom. Pico di Mirandola, who possessed a wonderful power of comprehension, became quickly familiar with the cabalistic formulas, and found in the cabala a confirmation of the Christian dogmas of the trinity, incarnation, original sin, the fall of the angels, purgatory and hell. Accordingly, he hastened to translate several cabalistic works from Hebrew into the Latin in order to acquaint Christian readers with this secret wisdom. Among the nine hundred theses which the twenty-four-year-old Pico pledged himself to defend in a public discussion with the scholars of the world whom he invited to come to Rome at his expense was also the one that no science proves more conclusively the divinity of Christ than the teachings of the Magi and the cabala. Pope Sixtus IV (1471-84) became in consequence such an admirer of the cabala that he ordered the translation of several cabalistic works into Latin for the purpose of Church propoganda.

Elijah del Medigo not only held aloof from these cabalistic vagaries, but had also the courage to state that the cabala was based upon error, that the Talmud knew nothing of it, and that the Zohar, the book regarded as sacred and ancient, was not the work of the celebrated Simon ben Yohai, but that of a forger. Although a warm adherent of Talmudic Judaism, he did not regard every statement of the Talmud as the truth. Requested by his disciple, Saul Kohen Ashkenazi of Candia (Crete) to state his views as to the criterion of a true religion, Elijah del Medigo wrote a small but comprehensive work, "The Proof of Religion" (Behinat ha-Dat) that, at the same time, affords a deep insight into his process of thought. It must be admitted that Elijah del Medigo contributed nothing new to religious philosophy in this book. The Italians, in general, did not enrich Judaism with new ideas. Del Medigo treats religions from the point of view of faith rather than from that of reason. However, in the intellectual desolation of that period, his sound views appear as an oasis in the desert. He deserves credit, at all events, for his opposition to the perversions introduced into Judaism by the cabalists and pseudo-philosophers, perversions which he recognized as foreign accretions and which he endeavored to remove.

The German rabbis who had immigrated into Italy assumed a decidedly hostile attitude to philosophy and its Italian representatives, Messer Leon and Elijah del Medigo, and cast a shadow of gloom with their sincere but one-sided and exaggerated piety in every place whither an unkind fate had driven them. New storms that broke loose over the German communities hurled the most wretched of their race into the country beyond the Alps. Under Emperor Frederick III (1440-1443), who for half a century looked on with astounding unconcern at the most impudent outrages perpetrated in his empire, many German communities had frequently to drain the cup of sorrow. Frederick himself was by no means hostile to the Jews; on the contrary, he often issued decrees for their protection; but his commands remained dead letters for the most part, and his negligence in the conduct of the government encouraged the evil-minded to commit the most cruel outrages. Merely to step outside the city wall was fraught with danger for the German Jews. Everyone was their enemy, and lay in wait for them in order to satisfy through them either his fanaticism or his greed. Every political feud that broke out in Germany now and then brought down misfortune upon the Jews. The Jews were expelled from Mayence as well as from other cities. Among those driven from Mayence were two profound Talmudists, Judah Menz and his nephew Moses Menz, the former emigrating to Padua where he was appointed to the rabbinate, and the latter remaining in Germany for a while and settling finally in Posen. As a result of the expulsions or persecutions, rabbis from other German communities too sought refuge in Italy. Because of their superior Talmudic knowledge, the immigrated Germans received the most important rabbinical offices in Italy, and transplanted their own one-sidedness and narrowness among the Jews of the country that was then making the most strenuous efforts to free itself from the shackles of medievalism. Next to Judah Menz, Joseph ben Solomon Colon was the most prominent rabbi of Italy, and both of these men were bitter opponents of the liberal tendency in Judaism and indulged in violent quarrels with its representatives, Messer Leon and Elijah del Medigo.

It would have been surprising if the fanatic monks had not begrudged the Jews of Italy their partial security and respectable social position. Their worst enemy at this period was the Franciscan Bernardinus de Feltre, a worthy disciple of the bloodthirsty Capistrano. A favorite text of his sermons was that Christians should keep a vigilant eye on their children to prevent the Jews from stealing, mistreating or crucifying them. He praised Capistrano as a model Christian. Friendly social intercourse with Jews was in his eyes the greatest sin against the Church. Inasmuch as the aristocracy, out of selfish interests, stood everywhere on the side of the Jews, Bernardinus incited the lower classes against them and their friends. Because a few Jewish capitalists were successful in their enterprises, he described the Jews in general as vampires. Had not common sense prevailed among the Italian population already at that time the Franciscan Bernardinus would have been to the Jews of Italy what the Dominican Vicente Ferrer was to the Jews of Spain in the beginning of the same century, and what Capistrano was to those of Germany and the Slavic countries. The authorities, however, often put a stop to his agitations. Duke Galeazzo of Milan ordered him to desist when he came to Bergamo to incite the people against the Jews. In Florence, and in Tuscany generally, the princes and the senate embraced the cause of the Jews with energy, and forced him to leave the country.

But though Bernardinus failed in Italy, he finally succeeded in inciting a bloody persecution in Tyrol. In Trent he observed to his chagrin the friendly intercourse existing between Jews and Christians, and the respect and confidence enjoyed by a skilled Jewish physician, Tobias, and a clever Jewess named Brunetta. Bernardinus, therefore, repeated his sermons, breathing hostility to the Jews in Trent also. When several Christians reproved him for his hatred of the Jews and remarked that the Jews of Trent, though not possessing the true faith, were good men, the monk replied: "You know not what evils these good men are going to bring upon you. Ere Easter Sunday shall have passed away they will give you a proof of their exceptional excellence." Bernardinus prophesied correctly. For he and other priests had concocted a malicious scheme that ruined the community of Trent and brought much evil upon the Jews of many lands, and chance played into their hands.

During Easter week (1475) a three-year-old Christian child named Simon, the son of poor parents, was drowned in the Adige, and his body floated down the river and happened to be halted by a rake in front of a house occupied by a Jew. The

Jew, to avert suspicion, immediately informed the Bishop Hinderbach of his discovery. The bishop proceeded to the spot with two prominent burghers, and had the body brought to the church. As soon as the news became known in the city, Bernardinus and other priests raised the cry that the Jews had tortured the child, killed it and cast it into the river, and exhibited the child's corpse in order to incite the populace against the Jews. Bishop Hinderbach thereupon had all the Jews of Trent thrown into chains and instituted a trial. A physician, Matthew Tiberinus, testified that the child had met with a violent death; and a baptized Jew, the calligrapher Wolfkan, made the most malicious charges against his former coreligionists. The accused Jews confessed under torture that they had lacerated Simon and drank his blood on the eve of the Passover. Brunetta was said to have furnished the pins with which the child was lacerated. It was alleged that in the house of a rabbi named Moses a letter was discovered in which the Jews of Saxony requested to be supplied with Christian blood for the approaching Passover. Only one of the tortured, a certain Moses, bore all torture bravely without subscribing to the horrible lie. The result was that all the Jews of Trent were burned, and it was decided to permit no Jews to settle in that city in the future. The physician Tobias is said to have committed suicide. Only four Jews embraced Christianity and were pardoned.

Bishop Hinderbach, Bernardinus and the monks of all orders exerted themselves to the utmost to exploit this incident for the destruction of the Jews. The body of the child was embalmed and recommended to the crowd as a sacred relic. Thousands made pilgrimages to his bones. A rumor soon spread that the body of young Simon radiated light, and so much was spoken of it that those who concocted the scheme themselves began to believe in the child's martyrdom. Two lawyers of Padua, sent to Trent to investigate the rumors, were nearly killed by the fanatic mob because they expressed their doubts. Generally, however, the miracle found credence, and the Jews of all Christian countries were placed in imminent danger as a result. Even in Italy the Jews dared not leave the cities to avoid exposing themselves to mistreatment as child murderers. The doge Pietro Mocenigo and the Senate of Venice, upon the complaint of the Jews that their lives and property were insecure, ordered the podesta (mayor) of Padua to protect the Jews energetically against attack, and to prohibit the friars to incite the people against them. The doge remarked on that occasion that the murder of a Christian child was invented for some purpose. Pope Sixtus IV firmly declined to canonize the child Simon and addressed a circular letter to all the cities of Italy (Oct. 10, 1475) in which he forbade to venerate Simon as a saint until he had the matter investigated. Nevertheless, the clergy continued to venerate Simon, and arranged pilgrimages to the church erected in his honor. The hatred against the Jews in Germany was heightened by this incident. The burghers of Frankfort-on-the-Main placed a statue on the bridge that led across the Main to Sachsenhausen representing a tortured child and Jews in a revolting attitude in league with the devil. The statue was inscribed with two lines speaking of the "villainies of the Jews."

The malicious report of the child murder of Trent spread like wildfire through many Christian countries, and brought down new misfortunes upon the Jews. But the community of Ratisbon, one of the oldest of Southern Germany, suffered more grievously than any other. That community enjoyed a reputation not only for piety but also for morality. The memory of man could recall no time when a native Jew of this city was placed on trial for any moral offences. The community was regarded as the most learned and as the mother of all other German communities. The community possessed certain ancient privileges that the emperors used to confirm upon their accession in return for a fixed money contribution. The Jews of Ratisbon were partly recognized as burghers, and, like the Christians, served in the militia as guards. One may almost say that the Bavarian princes and corporations scrambled for the Jews of Ratisbon for the purpose of extorting money from them, of course. In the second half of the fifteenth century they became a veritable apple of discord between the Emperor Frederick III and the duke of Bavaria-Landsburg. The noble family of the Kamerauer, as well as the magistrates of the city and the bishop also made claim upon the Jews. The magistracy received orders now from the one, now from the other to incarcerate the Jews or their representatives, or rabbi, at that time the much-tried Israel Bruna, until they should decide to pay the money demanded from them. The city council, it is true, endeavored to protect them, but only so long as such protection did not interfere with the interests of the burghers or the guilds.

To escape these annoyances and this heartless arbitrariness, the Jews determined to place themselves under the protection of one or another of the Hussite noblemen or warriors, for the heroism of the Calixtines still inspired the Catholics, particlarly and the clergy with fear. Subsequent events proved the wisdom of this step. A newly appointed Bishop named Henry insisted upon a strick execution of the canonical restrictions imposed upon the Jews, and Duke Louis of Bavaria made common cause with him, as it seems, to ruin the Jews of Ratisbon or to force them into baptism. To accomplish their purpose, they secured on the one hand the approval of the pope, and, on the other, the assistance of influential members of the town council, and availed themselves of the aid of two worthless baptized Jews. One of these, Peter Schwarz, wrote a pamphlet teeming with charges against and libels upon his former coreligionists, and the other, Hans Bayol, accused the aged rabbi Israel Bruna of all sorts of crimes and charged him specifically with buying and killing a seven-year-old child for ritual purposes. The aged rabbi of Ratisbon, already bent with the burden of many afflictions, had in consequence to face the charge of a capital crime.

Israel Bruna was one of those unfortunates who are constantly pursued by misfortune. When the emperor Frederick demanded the crown money from the Ratisbon community, and the duke Louis took exception to it, and the magistracy of Ratisbon was undecided whom to obey and whom to disobey, the emperor had Rabbi Israel Bruna incarcerated to force him to excommunicate the members of the community if they did not deliver one-third of their possessions to the imperial treasury. And this aged man was now accused by Hans Bayol of child murder and similar crimes! The people of Ratisbon did not doubt his guilt, and he was about to be executed at the suggestion of the clergy. The magistracy, fearing that it would be held responsible for the affair, had him imprisoned in order to save him from the fury of the populace. But the community of Ratisbon appealed not only to the powerless emperor, but also to the more dreaded Bohemian king Ladislaus; and both sent strict orders to the magistracy to release the imprisoned rabbi without the payment of a fine. The magistracy did not comply with the orders on the pretext that it feared the bishop and the mob; but, in its embarrassment, it determined to intimidate the informer Hans Bayol into a confession of the truth. Accordingly, Hans Bayol was siezed, taken to the place of execution where the hangman awaited him, and was urged not to enter into eternity with a lie on his lips. The hardened sinner, however, insisted upon the truth of his charges against the Jews in general, but confessed that Israel Bruna was innocent of the crime of child murder. As a consequence and upon the receipt of a second order from the emperor, Bayol was burned and the rabbi was restored to liberty (1474). But Israel Bruna had to take a solemn oath that he would seek no vengeance for the injustice done him, as though the poor, feeble old man was in a position to avenge himself.

Meanwhile, the news of the alleged murder of the child Simon in Trent reached Ratisbon, and added fuel to the flame. Bishop Henry induced the magistracy to institute criminal proceedings against the Jews of Ratisbon designated by the apostate Wolfkan (see above). As a result of the confessions extorted under torture, the entire community was placed under arrest. Guards were stationed day and night at the four gates of the Jewish quarter to prevent egress and ingress. All the property of the Jewish community was placed under attachment by the commissioners and judges. A horrible doom awaited the unfortunates. But the result of the trial that excited much attention in its day proved as disastrous to the burghers of Ratisbon as to the Jews. The emporer, who was thoroughly convinced of the groundlessness of the blood accusations, shook off his usual indolence for the nonce, and proved himself very energetic in this trial. He sent order upon order to the magistracy of Ratisbon (April, May, 1476) to liberate the imprisoned Jews at once, and to remove the guards from the Jewish quarter and to restore their property to the Jews. As the magistracy hesitated to obey his orders for fear of the bishop and the duke, the emperor became furious, declared Ratisbon in a state of rebellion, and sent the imperial solicitor-general to take its privileges away from the city, and threatened it with other punishments. Meanwhile, new charges were preferred against the Jews. The bishop of Passau had a large number of Jews executed either by sword, by fire or by red-hot tongs on the charge of desecrating a host, and "to the glory of God" and in memory of this barbarity a new church was erected in Passau (spring, 1478). A Jew and a Jewess of Ratisbon were accused as accomplices and imprisoned. All these occurrences were reported to the emperor in order to excite his fanaticism, but he persisted in his belief in the innocence of the Jews of Ratisbon, and issued a new order for the liberation of the Jews charged with the desecration of the hosts, as well as the other imprisoned Jews. The magistracy of Ratisbon finally was compelled to sign a written pledge to liberate the imprisoned Jews, and not to expel them from the city in consequence of this trial. In addition, the city was required to pay a fine of eight thousand gulden to the imperial treasury, and to stand security for ten thousand gulden which, for some unknown reason, were imposed as a fine upon the Jews of Ratisbon. The magistracy desisted from appealing to the pope on the ground that "the papal court was even more greedy than the imperial court."

When the Jews of Ratisbon were informed of the decision that they would be released on condition that they pay not alone the fine imposed upon them directly but also the one imposed on the city and the costs of the trial, they refused to accept it. Their representatives insisted that such payments were beyond their power, particularly so since their three years' detention prevented them from engaging in any commercial enterprises. The imprisoned and the detained preferred to remain in their present wretched situation rather than to be reduced to beggary. Accordingly they remained in detention two years longer, and were released at last after abjuring all vengeance and after taking a solemn oath that they would not remove their persons or their possessions from the city of Ratisbon (1480). The Jews of Suabia, however, were expelled at this time, undoubtedly in consequence of the blood accusation at Trent. As late as the eighteenth century this nefarious lie was repeated; and the Jews of various districts had to pay for it either with their property or with their lives. But in no country did the persecutions assume such a tragic character as they did on the Pyrenean Peninsula.

CHAPTER IV

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE INQUISITION IN SPAIN

(1481-1485)

The Maranos gave Spain no peace. Old Christians were jealous of the many New-Christians who occupied high offices in state and in church or had acquired great wealth, and the intolerant Dominicans who questioned the orthodoxy of the Maranos conspired to humiliate or to destroy these unbelieving Christians and disguised Jews. What they failed to accomplish under the vacillating Henry IV they hoped to achieve with the assistance of Queen Isabella, whose fanatic orthodoxy was well known. In Seville, on the occasion of the homage paid to the royal pair, these mortal enemies of the Maranos expressed their mortification at the fact that, despite the massacres of the Maranos in Toledo, Cordova and elsewhere, a large number of them still played an important part as high dignitaries, and that several bishops were of Jewish descent. They insinuated that seemingly the court was ruled by the Jews. The Dominican Alfonso de Ojeda, the prior of the monastery of St. Paul, sought to convince the queen of the pernicious influences of the

Maranos and gave her a horrifying description of the offences against the Church of which they were guilty. The queen readily lent an attentive ear. She was credulous enough to believe that God had raised her to power solely for the purpose of purifying Spanish Christianity from the stain of Judaism. Rumor had it that her confessor, Thomas de Torquemada, had extorted a vow from her when she was the infanta to dedicate her life to the extermination of heretics when she ascended the throne. The vague notion of the establishment of an inquisition to investigate the Maranos suspected of Judaizing and to condemn the guilty to death now assumed a definite shape. The royal pair turned to Pope Sixtus IV, from whom anything, good or evil, could be obtained for money, and obtained from him a bull (1478) authorizing them to appoint ecclesiastic inquisitors with power to judge heretics, apostates and their patrons in accordance with the laws and customs of the old inquisitions, to condemn them to death, and, what was the principal object of the inquisition, to confiscate their property.

Isabella proceeded at first with leniency. At her command the archbishop of Seville prepared a catechism for the use of the New-Christians and distributed copies of it among the priests of his diocese in order to instruct the Maranos in the articles of the Christian faith, its religious usages and sacraments. It certainly required a marvelous naiveté to believe that the baptized Jews would overcome their aversion to Christianity by means of a dry catechism. Naturally many Maranos persisted in what the Church called their infatuation—that is, in their loyalty to their ancestral faith. And when, in addition, a Jew or a Marano hurt the sensibilities of the royal pair by the publication of a little book in which he stigmatized Catholicism with its idolatrous cult and the government with its despotism, the queen became more and more inclined to entertain the proposal of the establishment of a bloody tribunal. This little book made such a deep impression that the queen ordered her confessor, Fernando de Talavera, to write a refutation (1480). The attitude of the court toward the New-Christians became ever more hostile. And when the commission appointed by the royal pair to investigate the possibility of reclaiming the Maranos reported that they were incorrigible, the commissioners were ordered to draw up a statute governing the new inquisition. The statute, the most ingenious scheme ever invented for the torture of innocent human beings and for rendering their life a continuous hell, was approved by the royal pair, and the inquisitorial tribunal was appointed (1480). It was composed of men worthy of such a bloody law; of the Dominicans Miguel Morillo, Juan de San Martin and lay assessors, and was confirmed by Pope Sixtus IV. This first tribunal was established first in Seville because that district was a royal possession and had no cortes, and because a large number of Maranos had lived there for nearly a century. The royal pair ordered the officials of the government to assist the inquisitors with all the means at their disposal.

Meanwhile the most prominent Maranos of Seville including the multi-millionaire Diego da Suson and the scholar Juan Fernando Abulafia and others who occupied official positions in the city, organized a conspiracy to prevent the opening of the inquisition. But this conspiracy was betrayed by Suson's beautiful daughter, who carried on a clandestine love affair with a Christian knight. Several of the conspirators were seized at once, and the dungeons of the St. Paul Monastery were filled with Maranos. Even those Maranos who had fled from Seville to the district of Medina-Sidonia and Cadiz on the assurance of security on the part of the governor of that district were disappointed in their hopes. As soon as the inquisition became organized (Jan. 2, 1481) it issued an edict to all officials to deliver the fugitive Maranos and to confiscate their property on pain not only of excommunication but also of subjecting themselves to the charge of aiding and abetting heresy. The number of the arrested Maranos was so large that the inquisitorial tribunal soon required a larger building for its purposes and selected the castle of la Tablada in a suburb of Seville. Later on, in scorn of the Jews, certain biblical verses: "Arise, O God! plead thy own cause" (Ps. 74:22), "Seize for us the foxes" (Cant. 2:15) were inscribed on the portals of this seat of blood—inscriptions that betray the absolute heartlessness of the judges. The arrested fugitives were treated as convicted heretics. With plenty of material, the inquisition proceeded to its first bloody session, and six Maranos who acknowledged either voluntarily or under torture their adherence to their ancestral faith, were condemned to death and burned. The Dominican prior de Ojeda dedicated the first auto-da-fé with an unctuous prayer. The imprisonment conspirators were tried next; Suson's wealth availed him naught, but proved rather a strong inducement for confiscation. The number of victims so increased from day to day that the city of Seville had to provide a special square for the constant funeral pyres. In the course of time this square became known as the Quemadero (place of burning). The spot is marked by four large misshapen images of prophets that have been preserved to this day to the disgrace of the Spaniards and of Christianity. For three centuries this spot saw the smoke of charred innocents ascend to heaven.

With the sweetness of tone that so skilfully conceals the shrewdness and the poison of the serpent beneath the gentleness of the dove, Miguel Morillo and his associates demanded that those New-Christians who were guilty of relapsing into Judaism voluntarily report within a given time and confess their sincere repentance when they would be given absolution and their property restored to them. Those who failed to take advantage of the given time and should be denounced as apostates, would be made to feel the entire severity of the canonical laws against heresy and apostasy. A large number of the credulous appeared before the inquisition with contrite mien in great numbers, repented of their sin of Judaizing, and expected absolution and security. But when this was done the inquisitors demanded in addition that they give under oath the names and addresses and other descriptions of persons of their acquaintance whom they knew to be Judaizing apostates. It was demanded of them in the name of God that they turn informers and traitors, that friend betray friend, brother his brother, and son his father. When terror, together with the assurance that the betrayed would not learn the names of their betrayers, loosened the tongues of the credulous, the tribunal had on hand a list of heretics that was to supply victims for its bloody work.

In addition to their intimidation of the wretched Maranos, the inquisitors demanded that all Spaniards, on pain of excommunication, turn traitors and denounce their acquaintances who were guilty of the Jewish heresy. It was an appeal to the most brutal passions of man: to malice, hatred or vengeance to gratify itself by denunciations, to greed, to enrich itself, and to religious fanaticism to acquire salvation by means of treachery. With its sense for the practical, the inquisition prepared a long index to serve the informers as a guide in their denunciations. Any baptized Jew is subject to denunciation if he observes the Sabbath or any Jewish festival, circumcises his boys, observes the dietary laws, wears a clean shirt or better garments or spreads a white table cloth on his table on the Sabbath, or kindles no fire on that day, walks about without shoes on the Day of Atonement, begs a friend's pardon on that day, lays his hand upon his child's head in blessing without making the sign of the cross, or pronounces a benediction over a cup of wine and passes it around to the members of his family. As a matter of course, the omission of Christian usages was the strongest ground for an accusation. A New-Christian subjected himself to suspicion if he read the psalms without adding in conclusion: "Glory be to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," or if he ate meat during lent. Even the most innocent conduct, if it happened to correspond to a Jewish usage, was regarded as an indication of heresy; such was the sending or the receiving of edibles as gifts on the Jewish Feast of Booths, or if the dying turned his face to the wall. Scoundrels had thus convenient opportunities for denunciations, and the tribunal itself could charge even the most sincere believers among the New-Christians with heresy if it desired to destroy their influence or confiscate their property. The dungeons of the inquisition were crowded with Jewish heretics in consequence. At the very beginning, fifteen thousand were seized and imprisoned.

The Christian priests of Moloch dedicated with a solemn procession the stake, the first religious spectacle (auto-da-fé) that was to be repeated innumerable times in the course of more than three centuries. The priests led the procession in their proud vestments with crucifixes, and were followed by the grandees in black costumes with banners and flags, the wretched victims in coarse garments (San Benito) and a vast multitude of spectators. Arrived at the place of execution, the inquisitors read the death sentence to the victims. Hypocrisy was added to the cruelty in that the sentence of death was executed not by the inquisitorial but by the secular authorities, because the Church desires not the death of the sinner! The Jewish heretics were either cast into the flames at once upon arriving at the place of execution, or, if they repented, were first strangled. On the 26th of March seventeen victims were burned on the Quemadero; in the following month a still larger number, and up to November of the same year (1481) nearly three hundred victims expired in the midst of fire and smoke, all in the district of Seville alone. But even death provided no security against the fury of the holy office. The religious hangmen disinterred the bodies of Maranos who had died as Jewish heretics, burned them, seized their property out of the hands of their heirs by confiscation, and condemned the latter to infamy and to poverty in order to prevent them from ever achieving a position of honor. What a wide scope such a procedure opened for royal greed!

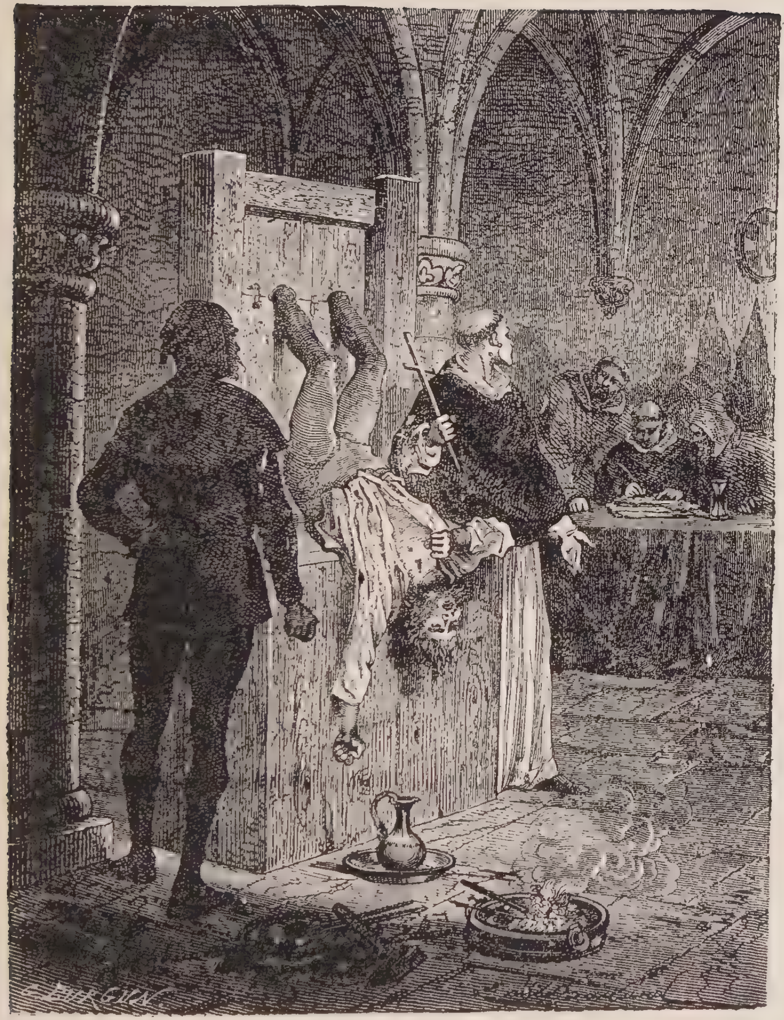
The Jews who remained loyal to their ancestral faith had to atone for the Maranos. The fanatics of the inquisition held the Jews responsible for the relapse of the New-Christians, as though the former had misled the latter into remaining loyal to Judaism in secret. The otherwise gentle Alfonso de Oropesa, general of the Hieronymites, who condemned the cruelty of the inquisition, incited the people against the Jews in writing and by word of mouth, maintaining that the intercourse of the Jews with the Maranos was responsible for the evil, that the Jews led astray after their faith or unbelief not only the New-Christians, but the old Christians as well, corrupted young Christian women almost publicly, and so on. From various quarters voices were raised demanding that the Maranos be completely separated from the Jews, and the royal pair accordingly issued an edict that the Jews of Andalusia, and particularly of the dioceses of Seville and Cordova where the Maranos lived in greater numbers than in any other district, must leave their homes and settle elsewhere. This edict was carried out too. Many thousand Jews whose forefathers had inhabited this territory, possibly even previous to the coming of the Visigoths and their conversion to Christianity, had to leave their homes (1482) and more than four thousand Jewish houses remained partly unoccupied. In the cities outside of Andalusia where they were permitted to take up their residence, they were confined to special Jewish quarters, and were compelled to wear the badge of disgrace. Only Jewish physicians whose services were indispensable to the Spanish population were permitted to visit the Christian quarters, despite the canonical laws to the contrary. Influential Jews could no longer exert themselves at court in behalf of their brethren. Don Abraham Senior still occupied an influential position at court, was highly respected because of his shrewdness, resourcefulness and wealth, and Isabella was so grateful to him that she settled upon him a considerable annuity for life. The success of the military expedition against the last Mohammedan possessions in Southern Spain was due to the care that Don Abraham took to provide the necessary financial means for the maintenance of the army. Despite the canonical laws and the royal edicts, he was appointed administrator-in-chief of all state revenues, and named by the royal pair chief-rabbi of all Spanish communities to succeed Jacob Nuñes. Don Abraham proved more than once his ardent sympathies with his unfortunate coreligionists, but was unable to mitigate the fanatic hatred that animated Ferdinand and Isabella.

The Maranos who had succeeded in escaping to Rome turned, meanwhile, to the then Pope, Sixtus IV, and complained bitterly at the cruel and arbitrary proceedings of the inquisitorial tribunal. As the complainants appeared before him not with empty hands, they found a receptive ear, and the pope sent an urgent letter to Ferdinand and Isabella (Jan. 29, 1484), in which he sharply criticized the practices of the inquisitors. He had been informed, he said, that the inquisitors had proceeded against all law, had imprisoned many people unjustly, inflicted cruel torture upon them, pronounced innocent people heretics, and confiscated the property of their heirs. The pope acknowledged that he had issued the bull for the establishment of the inquisition without due deliberation, and he warned the inquisitors de Morillo and San Martin that he would remove them from their office and restore the inquisitorial powers to the bishops to whom they belonged by right if any further complaints were made to him about their conduct. Moreover, the pope declined the request of King Ferdinand for permission to establish extraordinary inquisitorial tribunals in the remaining provinces of the united kingdom.

But King Ferdinand knew well that a golden key would open wide the doors of the papal palace, and two weeks later (Feb 11, 1482) he obtained from the pope the necessary authorization to establish the inquisition in the provinces of Aragon also, and the appointment of the bloodthirsty fanatic Thomas de Torquemada as inquisitor-in-chief. Sixtus IV, to whose special advantage it was then to be on good terms with the Spanish court, made every concession to Ferdinand as far as the inquisition was concerned. As it frequently happened that the Maranos who succeeded in escaping to Rome after being condemned by the inquisition obtained absolution from the pope, for a consideration, and were subjected to but a slight and secret penance, the royal pair saw themselves disagreeably thwarted in their efforts to destroy the race of the Maranos, to purify the faith, and, above all, to obtain possession of the property of the Maranos. The court therefore urged upon the pope to appoint a judge of appeals in Spain itself to prevent any unfavorable outside interferences with the decisions of the inquisitions. The pope granted this request also (Nov. 25, 1483).

All the horrors of the inquisition in the course of the first three years of its existence were mere child's play in comparison with what that institution became after the appointment of Thomas de Torquemada as inquisitor general. Thomas de Torquemada was the very embodiment of the inquisition with all its fiendish malice, its heartless severity and bloodthirsty cruelty. Hitherto, the inquisition was limited to Southern Spain, to the districts of Seville and Cadiz, to Christian Andalusia proper, and could gain no entry in the other provinces of Spain because the cortes were opposed to its introduction. King Ferdinand, however, had not as yet confiscated sufficient property, and the pious Isabella had not yet seen enough Maranos burned. An inquisitor-general was therefore appointed who was to establish, conduct and supervise special tribunals in order that none of the suspected Maranos might escape his fate and that the resistance of the population might be overcome by intimidations of all sorts.

The inscription which Dante's poetic imagination places on the gate of the inferno: "Leave all hopes behind, ye who enter here," was even more appropriate for the entrance to all the inquisitorial



A Scene from the Inquisition

edifices erected by Torquemada in nearly all the large cities of Spain. Immediately after his appointment, he established tribunals in Cordova, Joen and Villareal, and later in Toledo. All the inquisitors appointed by Torquemada were fanatic and over-zealous Dominicans who yielded implicit obedience to their chief so that they worked altogether like the organs of a single body, prepared at his beck to commit the most outrageous cruelties with a calmness which cannibals might envy. Since that time Spain was filled with the moldiness of jails, the smell of cadavers and the smoke of burned Jews who were forced to accept a faith the falsity of which was laid bare by every step of the servants of the Church. A cry of heart-rending woe rang throughout the beautiful land, but their majesties paralyzed the arms of those who, seized by pity, sought to put a stop to the slaughter of innocents.

To establish the inquisition permanently in his hereditary land of Aragon, too, in order to fill his purse with the gold of the New-Christians of that country also, the king had to abolish the ancient chartered privileges of the country that forbade the confiscation of the property of an Aragonian, no matter what crime he may have committed. Thereupon the inquisitor-general de Torquemada appointed for the archbishopric of Saragossa two inquisitors who were his equals in fanatic bloodthirstiness, the canon Pedro Arbues de Epila and the Dominican monk, Gaspard Juglar. Torquemada, the soul of the inquisition, framed a "constitution" (published Jan. 9, 1485) as a guide for the judges to make the meshes of the net as tight as possible—an instrument worthy of the ingenuity of malignant demons. A law was issued granting a month of grace to those who would voluntarily confess their secret practice of Judaism; they were, however, to make their confession in writing, reply candidly to all questions put to them, and in particular name their accomplices and even those whom they merely suspected as guilty of the Judaizing heresy. Those who confessed after the expiration of the month of grace were, it is true, to obtain indulgence, but they were to lose their property, they and their descendants were to be disqualified forever from holding any public office, and were never to be permitted to wear any costly garments.

Even persons who were clothed with the dignity of Catholic priesthood did not escape suspicion and the stake. Pedro Fernandez de Alcandete, born and reared in the Christian religion, a canon and treasurer of the cathedral of Cordova, was arrested by the inquisition on the serious charge of having borne a secret Jewish name, of having observed Jewish festivals, of having eaten unleavened bread on the Passover, and, above all, of having admonished the Maranos with whom he came in contact to observe Judaism because Christianity was a delusion. Whether these charges were proven or not mattered little. The canon was condemned to death by the tribunal of Cordova and burned alive.

In May, 1485, the tribunal was opened in Toledo. The opening began with the sermon of a licentiate on the pious work of the inquisition, with the reading of the bull of Sixtus IV that conferred absolute power of life and death on the judges, with the threat of excommunication against anyone who should offend the inquisition by word or deed, with the administration of an oath to all royal officials to assist the inquisition in every possible way, and with a call to the Maranos to confess and repent of their relapse into Judaism and submit to penance. The Maranos were given forty days of grace. In the first two weeks, however, no Marano reported. The Maranos, on the contrary, formed a conspiracy to fall upon the inquisitors in the course of a procession, kill them and their retinue of nobles and knights, and, as rumor exaggerated it later, to massacre the entire Christian population of Toledo. So dangerous the enterprise could have been by no means, since no man of influence and position stood at the head of the conspiracy; the prominent Maranos of Toledo had been killed or forced into flight two decades before. One of the leaders of the conspiracy was a young scholar, de la Torre, and his accomplices were mechanics. This enterprise, doomed to failure anyway, was betrayed, and four or five conspirators were seized and hanged by the Mayor of Toledo, Gomez Manrique. Many saved themselves by flight. The mayor of Toledo, fearing that the city would become depopulated if he were to deal severely with the suspected Maranos at once, changed his tactics and imposed upon the suspects only a fine for the war against the Mohammedan kingdom of Granada.

The failure of the conspiracy left the Maranos of Toledo no choice but submission; that is, to confess that they had Judaized more or less and to atone for their sins, but, as an eye-witness reports, out of fear of rather than out of love for the Catholic faith. To get behind the truth of these confessions and the sincerity of this repentance, the inquisitors made public announcement that every one is obliged, on pain of excommunication, to report to the inquisition within a few months what he knows of the heretical practices of the Maranos of his acquaintance. They then summoned the rabbis of the district of Toledo, and made them take an oath on the Torah, threatening them with death in case of disobedience, that they would announce in the synagogs that every Jew on pain of excommunication is bound to denounce the Maranos whom he knew to practice any Jewish rite or custom. It was a diabolical scheme worthy of Torquemada, its inventor, to compel the Jews themselves who knew the secret of the pretended Christians to betray their coreligionists or even their relatives so that not a single Judaizing Marano could escape. Whether this means led to the desired goal or not, enough victims were involved in the confessions and statements of these Maranos who had acknowledged their guilt to supply the inquisition with a plenitude of material for its bloody work. Those Maranos who failed to acknowledge their guilt and were denounced by others, as well as those who had made false assertions in their declarations of repentance were placed in dark cells to await further examination and sentence.

The first victims of the inquisition in Toledo were three men and three women who fell into the hands of the inquisitor by an accident. The Marano Sancho de Ciudad, his wife Maria Diaz, his son and daughter-in-law, and Gonzales de Teba and his wife, of Villa-Real, who were secret Jews, fled to Valencia for fear of the inquisition and took passage on a ship sailing from port in order to leave the country. Driven by a storm into a Spanish port, they were arrested, brought to Toledo and burned at the stake.

Those who were imprisoned through the testimony of witnesses or through informers were made to confess under torture. The accused were for the most part so weary of life that they made confessions involving themselves, their friends and even their dearest ones in such charges that seemed to justify the necessity of the inquisition. Each trial of a Marano involved others in seeming complicity and led to new investigations, new charges, and produced an ever growing number of victims. Torquemada appointed inquisitors after his own image; in Saragossa, as stated before, he appointed Pedro de Arbues de Epilas who, because of his inhumanity, was canonized in recent times. Like in Toledo, Arbues began his work with imprisonment and condemnations.

The cities of the kingdom of Aragon and Valencia were bitterly opposed to the introduction of the inquisition. The Aragonians cherished their privileges like the apple of the eye and now the inquisition was to be given such unlimited power over life and property! The New-Christians who occupied high offices and influential positions in Aragon were actively engaged in increasing this dissatisfaction. In Teruel and Valencia violent uprisings ensued upon the introduction of the inquisition (1485) that could be suppressed only by bloodshed.

But the Aragonian New-Christians and also old Christians of high rank did not give up the plan of thwarting the inquisitorial tribunal. As soon as the first victims had fallen in Saragossa they exerted their influence to induce the cortes to protest both to the pope and to the king against the continuance of the inquisition. In Rome where everything could be obtained for money they expected to meet with little difficulty. To influence the king in their favor seemed more difficult. As a matter of fact, Ferdinand persisted in his determination to rid himself of the Judaeo-Christians by means of the inquisition, and to inherit their property. When peaceful efforts proved vain, a conspiracy was formed to remove Arbues, the inquisitor-in-chief of Aragon out of the way, in order to paralyze the activities of the tribunal by terror. The leaders of this conspiracy were Juan Pedro Sanchez who, with his brothers, stood high at court, a jurist James de Montesa, and two new-Christians, Sancho de Peternoy and Louis de Santangel. Many other influential men joined the conspiracy, among them Francisco de Santa Fé a son of the apostate Joshua Lorqui, who had brought so many misfortunes upon his former coreligionists. A nobleman, Blasco de Alagon, collected the funds necessary for this enterprise, and Juan de Abadia undertook to hire the assassins and to superintend the murder of Arbues. Many prominent men of Jewish descent from Saragossa, Tarracona, Calatajud, Huesca and Barbastro joined the conspiracy and contributed to the expenses of the enterprise. One morning (Sept. 15, 1485), at dawn, the conspirators fell upon Arbues while on his way to early mass, inflicted wounds upon him from the effects of which he died two days later. But the news of the murder of the chief-inquisitor of Saragossa produced an effect contrary to what the conspirators expected. The orthodox Christians banded together and shouted in fierce voices: "To the fire with the Judaeo-Christians who had murdered the judge of the inquisition." The Maranos would have fared badly had not the archbishop Alfonso de Aragon, riding on his horse, succeeded in persuading the multitude to refrain from violence. He promised them complete satisfaction by the severe punishment of the murderers and their accomplices.

King Ferdinand took advantage of the miscarried conspiracy to strengthen the inquisition in Aragon. Of the murdered Arbues the royal pair made a veritable idol. To the Dominicans the violent death of the first inquisitor was no less a godsend since they needed a martyr to surround the bloody tribunal with a halo of glory. They now bent their efforts to have Pedro Arbues canonized.

The miscarried conspiracy of the Maranos of Saragossa self-evidently supplied the Molech with an astounding multitude of new victims. One of the conspirators, Vidal de Uranso, made frank and thorough confession, and the inquisitors thus obtained a list of all the accomplices. The leaders of the conspiracy who did not succeed in fleeing were dragged through the streets of Saragossa, had their hands cut off, and were then hanged. More than three hundred New-Christians were condemned to death as accomplices; among these about thirty men and women of prominent Marano families were burned. Francisco de Santa Fé, the son of the apostate Lorqui, met a similar fate. The extent of the barbarity of the inquisitors is characterized by the following episode: One of the conspirators, Gaspar de Santa Cruz, succeeded in escaping to Toulouse where he died. The inquisition, however, did not content itself with burning him in effigy, but arrested his son on the charge of having assisted his father in his flight, and sentenced him to proceed to Toulouse, present to the Dominicans of that city the verdict of the inquisition and request them to disinter his father's body and burn it. The son obeyed and brought to Saragossa the certificate of the Dominicans in which they attested that the body of the father was dishonored at the request of the son.

Several cities of Northern Spain, Lerida and Barcelona among them, offered a stubborn resistance to the introduction of the inquisition within their walls, but their protests were all in vain. The iron will of King Ferdinand and the bloody fanaticism of Torquemada surmounted every obstacle and the papal court had to say Amen to everything. In the year after the murder of Arbues, two hundred Maranos were burned in Barcelona and in the island of Majorca alone. A Jewish contemporary (Isaac Arama) writes: "In our day the pillars of smoke (the stakes) ascend to the very heavens in all Spanish kingdoms and in the islands. A third part of the Maranos perished in the flames, a third wander about here and there in search of a hiding place and the remainder live in constant dread of investigations." The number of victims thus grew year by year. The eleven tribunals of the inquisitors converted the beautiful land of Spain into a flaming Tophet, and its fiery tongue soon reached and consumed old Christians too. In the thirteen years of Torquemada's absolute power over the Maranos, at least two thousand of them were burned at the stake. About seventeen thousand of those who had made confession and repented were outlawed.

CHAPTER V

THE EXPULSION OF THE JEWS FROM SPAIN AND PORTUGAL

(1485-1497)

The monster of the inquisition that first turned its fury upon the New-Christians gradually extended its claws towards the Jews, too, and brought upon them untold miseries. The relation between the Jews and the Maranos was too intimate for the former to escape being involved in the sufferings of the latter. The Jews entertained the keenest sympathy for their unfortunate brethren who were forced to wear the mask of Christianity, and endeavored to keep them within the fold. They instructed the Christian born Maranos in the rites of Judaism, held secret religious meetings with them for prayer, supplied them with religious books, informed them of the approach of fast-days and festivals, provided them with unleavened bread for the Passover, and with ritually prepared meat throughout the year, and circumcised their newly-born boys. To put a stop to this intimacy the royal pair expelled the Jews from Seville and Andalusia and separated them rigidly from the Maranos in every district where the latter lived in large numbers. But all this severity could not break the bond of love that united the Jews with Maranos. They continued their intercourse, though with greater secrecy and circumspection. The greater the danger of discovery the greater was the attraction to meet, to comfort and to encourage one another. Because of their secrecy and danger, the meetings between the Jews and Maranos assumed a romantic tinge, and there developed between them a relation of love as it were, that became all the closer and firmer the greater the attempts to sever it. The diabolical Torquemada, as stated above, sought to force the rabbis and the Jews to betray their secret coreligionists. As this attempt failed and the secret intercourse between the Jews and the Maranos continued in spite of all the efforts to stop it, the inquisition urged upon the royal pair to expel the Jews from Spain.

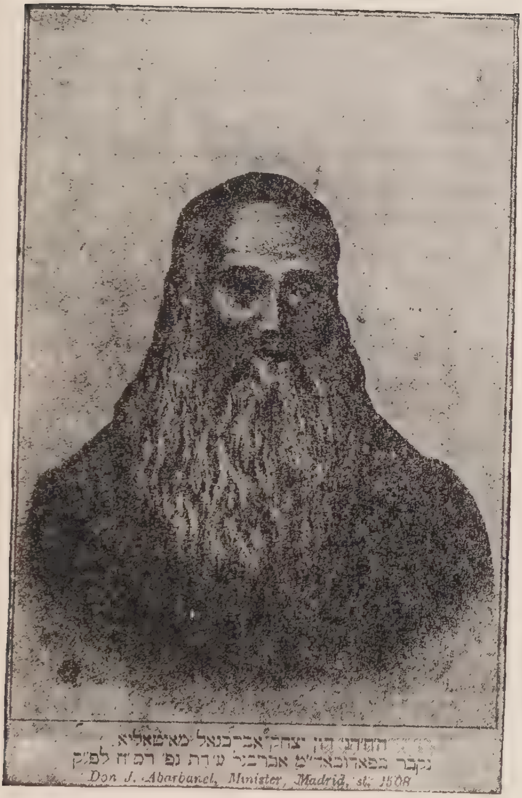
The Jews of Castile and Aragon might easily have foreseen that Spain would not tolerate them much longer, but they loved their native land so dearly that they would not leave her without compulsion. The royal pair, too, protected them often from violence. Moreover, the Spanish Jews counted upon their indispensability to the Christians and upon the Jewish court favorites. Abraham Senior who had furthered the marriage of the royal pair stood high in royal favor. It happened, in addition, that at the very time Torquemada was laying his snares for the Maranos and the Jews the celebrated Abrabanel was appointed to a very important office at the Castilian court, and enjoyed great influence. The Spanish Jews believed that his protection would counteract the fury of the venomous Dominicans.

Don Isaac Abrabanel (b. 1437 in Lisbon, d. 1509 in Venice), who claimed Davidic descent, closed the line of illustrious Spanish-Jewish statesmen that began with Hasdai ibn Shaprut. His was a precocious, lucid mind, but matter-of-fact, without depth and flight of imagination. His mind grasped the obvious, the things and the circumstances of the present, the palpable realities, with unerring tact, but less so the remote. The profundities of Judaism, its glorious antiquity and its conception of God, were the favorite studies of Abrabanel, and, at an early age, he wrote a book (Ateret Zekenim), in which he discusses divine providence in general, and the special providence of God over Israel. But his philosophic conceptions were more acquired than inherent. On the other hand, however, Don Isaac was a shrewd businessman, financier and statesman. The then king of Portugal, Alfonso V, a cultured, humane and kind ruler, appreciated his talents, entrusted him with the administration of the finances, and consulted him on important questions of state. Abrabanel's noble character, his sincere religiousness, his modesty and his unselfish wisdom won him the wholehearted friendship of many grandees within and without the court. He stood on intimate terms of friendship with the powerful and benevolent Duke Fernando de Braganza, with his brothers the Marquis of Montemar and the Count of Faro, and with the scholar Juan Sezira, who stood high in the court and was a friend of the Jews.

Alfonso's reign was the last golden age for the Jews of Portugal. Although the Portuguese code compiled during his reign included the Byzantine and canonical restrictions against the Jews, the king himself had no share in its compilation which was made during his minority, and he never enforced the anti-Jewish laws. In his days, the Jews of Portugal bore no badges, rode proudly on richly caparisoned horses and mules, dressed in the national costume of long coats, fine capes, silken doublets and gilded swords, and were in no wise distinguishable from the Christians. The administration of the finances was mostly in Jewish hands. Even high dignitaries of the Church appointed Jews as collectors of the church taxes against which the cortes of Lisbon protested. The independence of the Jewish communities, under a chief rabbi and seven provincial rabbis was recognized by Alfonso, and included in the code. This code conferred upon the Jews the privilege of drawing up their deeds and records in the Hebrew language also.

Alfonso had two other Jewish favorites besides Abrabanel. These were the brothers Ibn Yahyah Negro, sons of Don David, who is said to have advised them before his death not to invest the legacy he left them in real property because the expulsion of the Jews from Portugal was imminent.

As long as Isaac Abrabanel enjoyed the favor of the king, he was to his coreligionists "strength and protection, rescued the afflicted from the hands of their enemies, healed the breaches, and delivered the Jews from the lions," as his poetic son, Judah Leon, described him. Don Isaac, whose heart beat with sympathy for all sufferers, who was a father to the orphan and a comforter to the sorrowing, felt a still deeper compassion with the unfortunates of his own race. When Alfonso captured the African port of Arzilla, and among the many thousand captive Moors two hundred and fifty Jews also were brought to Portugal and sold as slaves throughout the country, Abrabanel appointed a committee of twelve members of the Lisbon community to collect funds for the ransom of the Jewish slaves. Abrabanel, with one associate, traveled about the country, ransomed the Jewish slaves, of-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Don J. Abarbanel, Minister, Madrid, st. 1508

Don Isaac Abravanel

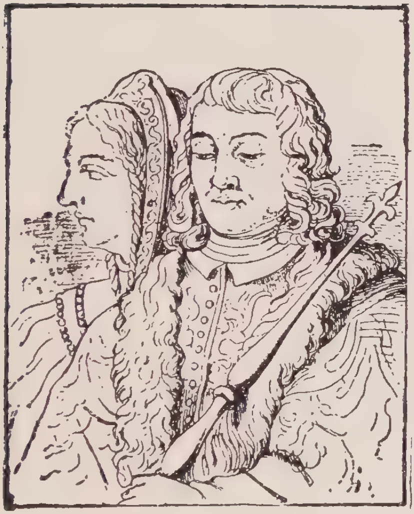
ten at a high price, and clothed and supported them until they were in a position to take care of themselves. When Alfonso sent an embassy to Pope Sixtus IV to congratulate him upon his ascension and to inform him of the Portuguese victory over the African Moors, Abrabanel made his friend, Juan Sezira, who was a member of the embassy solemnly promise him that he would intercede with the pope in behalf of the Jews. He requested his friend, Jehiel of Pisa, to treat Juan Sezira and the head of the embassy, Lopo de Almeida, with every possible courtesy and distinction in order to show how much the Italian Jews appreciated the friendship of King Alfonso to the Jews, and that the king and his servants might feel flattered thereby. Abrabanel thus exerted himself in behalf of his coreligionists in every possible way.

In the midst of his happiness which he shared with his noble wife and three sons—Judah Leon, Isaac, and Samuel—the wheel of fortune turned against him. His patron, Alfonso V, died, and the king's son, Juan II (1481-95), ascended the throne. The new king who was totally unlike his father, and possessed a stronger will power, a stern disposition, and the art of dissimulation, prosecuted the policy of the unscrupulous Louis I of France, of ridding himself of the grandees in order to establish an absolute monarchy. His first victim was the Duke Fernando de Braganza, himself of royal blood, almost as powerful and respected as, and more popular than the king. While feigning friendship for him, he had the duke seized on the charge, which was never proven, of having entered into treasonable negotiations with Ferdinand and Isabella, had him tried and beheaded, and confiscated his extensive estates (June, 1483). His brothers had to seek safety in flight. As Isaac Abrabanel had stood on intimate terms of friendship with the Duke of Braganza and his brothers, the king suspected him too of being an accomplice in the alleged conspiracy, and summoned him to his presence. Suspecting no harm, Abrabanel was ready to obey when an unknown friend warned him of his danger, and advised him to flee without delay. Abrabanel acted upon this advice, fled to Spain, and safely reached the Spanish border, pursued by the King's horsemen who could not overtake him. From Spain he addressed a humble but manly letter to the king in which he asserted his own innocence as well as that of the Duke of Braganza. King Juan paid no credence to Abrabanel's defense, and confiscated his property as well as that of his son, Judah Leon, who was a physician, but permitted his wife and sons to join him in Castile.

In Toledo where he settled, Isaac Abrabanel was received with honr by the Jewish community, and a circle of scholars and disciples soon grouped themselves about the distinguished Portuguese statesman. He formed an intimate acquaintance with Rabbi Isaac Aboab and with the chief tax-collector, Abraham Senior, who, it appears, made him a partner in the farming of taxes. But disturbed in his conscience for neglecting the study of the law for political affairs and in the service of Mammon, and accepting his misfortune resignedly as a just divine chastisement, Abrabanel, at the urgent request of his new friends, made preparations to write a commentary on the earlier prophets that had hitherto been neglected by commentators on account of their seeming simplicity. As the study of these books had occupied his attention ere this, he was enabled to complete his commentaries in a short time. As a matter of fact, Abrabanel, like no one else, was peculiarly adapted for this work. In addition to his knowledge of languages, he possessed the worldly experience and the familiarity with the political intricacies that are so essential to a deeper understanding of the rise and fall of the Israelitish kingdom. Moreover, he had this advantage over other commentators that he was in a position to adapt whatever of value was to be found in the works of Christian commentators also. In these commentaries, therefore, Abrabanel shed much light upon several obscure points. On the whole, Abrabanel treated his work in a scientific manner, arranged it in orderly form, and, in imitation of Christian scholars, prefaced each book with an illuminating introduction and with a summary of its contents. Had not Abrabanel been so prolix, and had he not introduced each biblical chapter with many, often superfluous questions, his commentaries would have or, at least, would have deserved to become more popular. Moreover, Abrabanel loves to indulge in philosophic speculations for which he had but little aptitude. Abrabanel follows the orthodox tendency of Nahmanides and Crescas, is intolerant of any liberal views, condemns the speculations of Albalag and Narbohi as heretical, and even insults them by placing them in the same category with the unscrupulous apostate, Abner-Alfonso de Valladolid. He rebukes Levi ben Gerson too, because he did not implicitly believe in miracles like Joseph Jaabez and other orthodox Jews of his time, he was convinced that the humiliation and the persecution of the Spanish Jews were a divine retribution for the liberal opinions entertained by Jewish thinkers here and there. But did the ultra-pious German Jews, who had no conceptions whatever of any heretical philosophy, suffer the less?

Abrabanel, however, could enjoy only for a short time the leisure that enabled him to pursue his favorite studies, for Ferdinand and Isabella soon called upon him to take charge of the financial administration of Spain. Spain was facing bankruptcy on account of the extraordinary expenses incident to the war upon Granada. Arabanel's financial ability, however, stood Spain in good stead. His administration which continued for eight years (March 1484-1492) was eminently successful. Abrabanel himself tells that he acquired wealth while in the service of the king, and that he received high honors at the hands of the court. How indispensable he must have been, when their Catholic majesties, under the very eyes of the venomous Torquemada, and in violation of the canonical laws, had to entrust a Jew with the finances, the very life blood of the country! Abrabanel frequently interceded in behalf of his coreligionists in Castile, as he did in Portugal, against the incitements of the Dominicans. That the Castilian Jews did not succumb to the wrath of the inquisitors because of the assistance the former rendered the unfortunate Maranos was surely due to Abrabanel's influence.

Meanwhile there broke out the war against Granada that terminated so unhappily for the Moors and the Jews, that continued with some interruption for ten years, and to which the Jews, too, had to contribute an extraordinary war tax. In the kingdom of Granada that owed its downfall to its arrogance, there was a considerable Jewish population which was swelled by the influx of Maranos who had succeeded in escaping from the Spanish inquisition. In Granada, too, the condition of the Jews was not an enviable one, for the Mohammedans borrowed their Jew-hatred from their Spanish neighbors, but here the Jews were at least permitted to practice their religion undisturbed, and their life was not always threatened. Isaac Hamon was the physician of one of the last kings of Granada, and enjoyed the favor of the



FERDINAND AND ISABELLA

court and the respect of the people. Once, when two Mohammedans engaged in a street brawl in Granada, the onlookers charged the combatants to desist by the life of Mohammed but without success. But when they were urged to desist by the life of the royal physician they stopped at once. This incident that proved that Isaac Hamon was more respected by the population than the prophet Mohammed, incited several pious Mohammedans to fall upon the Jews and to massacre them. Only those Jews were saved who found refuge in the royal castle. Since that time the Jewish physicians of Granada decided to dress no more in silks or to ride on horses to avoid exciting the envy of the Mohammedan population.

After a long and bloody war Granada the beautiful fell into the hands of the haughty Spaniards. The last indiscrete king of Granada, Muley Abu-Abadallah (Boabdil), signed a secret compact with Ferdinand and Isabella (Nov. 25, 1491) to surrender the city and the kingdom within two months. Under the circumstances the conditions were rather favorable. The Moors were to enjoy religious freedom, judicial independence, the right to emigrate, and, in general, were to be permitted to retain their names and customs, and to pay only the same taxes that they had hitherto paid the Moorish princes. The renegades, that is the Spanish Mohammedans who had been forced to accept Christianity and who had fled to Granada from the inquisition where they returned to Islam, were to remain in Granada unmolested and not to be subject to the inquisition. The Jews of Granada were to enjoy the same considerations and rights as the Moors. The Maranos who had returned to Judaism in Granada were to be permitted to emigrate within a month after the transfer of the city; those who remained longer were to be delivered into the hands of the inquisition. On January 2, 1492, Ferdinand and Isabella made their triumphal entry into Granada amidst shouts of applause and the ringing of bells. The Mohammedan empire in the Peninsula and vanished like a dream in a tale of the Arabian Nights. The last prince, Muley Abu-Abdallah, cast his last sad farewell glance, "with a last sigh," upon the glory that departed from him, retired for a while in the district of the Alpujarras Mountains that was left him, and finally crossed over into Africa, unable to overcome his dejection. After a lapse of nearly eight centuries, the entire Pyrenean Peninsula again became Christian territory as it was in the days of the Visigoths. But heaven could not rejoice at this victory that supplied the masters of hell with fresh human victims. The Jews were the first to feel the tragic effects of this victory over Granada.

The war against the Mohammedans of Granada had gradually assumed the character of a crusade against the unbelievers of a holy war for the glory of the cross and for the propagation of the true faith; and the victory threw all the Spaniards into a frenzy of ardent fanaticism. The unbelieving Mohammedans were conquered; are the still more unbelieving Jews to remain undisturbed in the country? The answer to this question must needs be a disastrous one to the Jews. The insistance of Torquemada and his associates upon the expulsion of the Jews, hitherto disregarded, was now received with greater attention on the part of the rulers who were drunk with victory. Moreover, inasmuch as the royal treasury was greatly enriched by the enormous booty captured in Granada, it seemed that the Jews could easily be dispensed with. Even before the conquest of Granada, Ferdinand and Isabella already entertained the idea of expelling the Jews from Spain. They had sent an embassy to

Pope Innocent VII informing the Pope that they were prepared to drive the Jews beyond the borders of their land if he, the vicar of Christ, whose duty it is to avenge the death of Christ on his murderers, would set the example. But this otherwise depraved pope who was the father of seven illegitimate sons, and as many daughters, and who violated his solemn oath immediately upon his ascension, was opposed to the expulsion of the Jews. Meshullam, of Rome, who received the news of the pope's decision, joyously announced the glad tiding to the Italian and Neapolitan communities that the pope had refused to expel them. But Ferdinand and Isabella decided to banish the Jews without the papal example.

From the magnificent palace of the Alhambra their "Catholic" majesties suddenly issued a decree that all Jews of Spain must leave Castile, Aragon, Sicily and Sardinia, on pain of death, within four months (March 31, 1492). They might take their possessions with them, but must not carry away gold, silver, coins, or articles the export of which is prohibited. This heartless edict their majesties justified solely on the ground that the relapse of the New-Christians in the "Jewish unbelief" as a result of their intercourse with Jews had given rise to dissatisfaction. The edict adds that it would have been proper to expel the Jews ere this on account of their seductive enticements to apostasy and that the royal pair, prompted by benevolence, banished the Jews from Andalusia only and punished the most grievous offenders in the hope that those means would suffice. As those means failed, and as the Jews persisted daily in their evil designs to alienate the New-Christians from the Catholic faith, the only means left their majesties of depriving the Jews of the opportunity of seducing again those who had hitherto remained faithful to the Church as well as the renegades who had repented and returned to the holy mother church, was their complete expulsion. Their majesties, upon consultation with several prelates, grandees and scholars decided to expel the Jews from all their states. No Christian, on pain of the confiscation of his property, was to assist or harbor Jews after the expiration of the time fixed for their expulsion.

The blow which the far-sighted had long feared thus fell at last. The Spanish Jews were to leave the land to which they clung with every fibre of their being, where their forefathers slept the eternal sleep for at least fifteen centuries, and to whose greatness, wealth and culture they had contributed so much. The blow dazed the Jews of Spain. Abrabanel believed that his influence would enable him to avert the disaster. He hastened to Ferdinand and Isabella, and offered them extravagant sums of money in behalf of the Jews, if they would revoke their edict. His Christian friends, eminent grandees, supported his petition. Ferdinand, who was bent on his own enrichment rather than on the glorification of the Catholic Church, was on the point of yielding when Torquemada interfered. Report has it that the inquisitor-general, hearing of the negotiations, hastened to the presence of Ferdinand and Isabella, and holding the crucifix aloft, he exclaimed: "Judas Iscariot sold Christ for thirty pieces of silver, your majesties are ready to sell him for three hundred thousand ducats. Here he is, sell him." These words, or the influence of fanatic priests, induced the queen who, on the whole, was bolder than the king, to persist in the execution of the edict, and her views ultimately prevailed upon her husband. Juan de Lucena, an influential member of the royal council of Aragon, was particularly active in advocating the execution of the edict. The efforts of Don Abraham Senior, like those of Abrabanel, were futile. Towards the end of April (1492) heralds proclaimed throughout the land that the Jews would be permitted to remain in the country only till the end of July in order to arrange their affairs; those who were found on Spanish soil after that time would be punished with death.

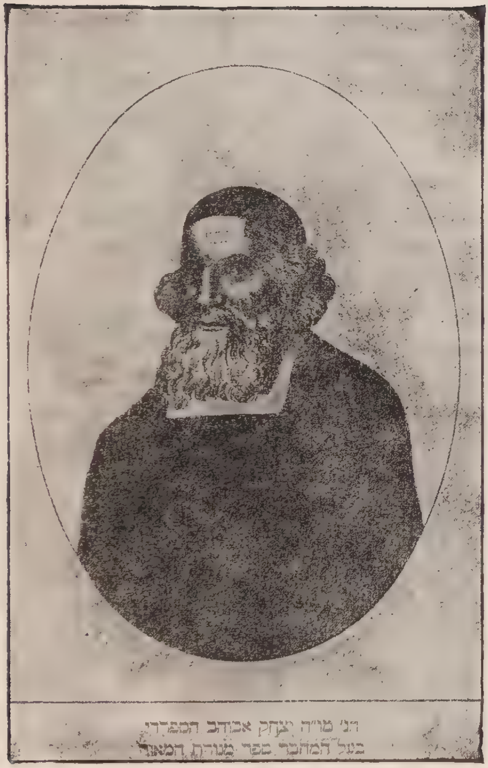
Great as was the despair of the Spanish Jews at the fate that was awaiting them, they had to accustom themselves to the thought of and to make serious preparations for their departure. But they realized on every step that the fate in store for them was even more cruel than they anticipated. Had they been permitted to take their wealth with them, as was the case with the English Jews at the end of the thirteenth century and with the French Jews a century later, they would have been in a position to secure a tolerable existence in some foreign country. But the Jewish capitalists were not permitted to take their ready money with them and were therefore forced to exchange them for notes which, however, were of little value since the international commerce of Spain was, for the most part, in the hands of Jews and New-Christians, and the latter were afraid to enter into commercial negotiations with the former lest they incur the vengeance of the inquisition. The owners of real property could find no buyers, and had to beg the Christians to take it from them at their own prices. A contemporary, Andreas Bernaldez, vicar of Los Palacios, reports that the most palatial residences and the finest estates were sold for a trifle. A house was exchanged for a mule, and a vineyard for a piece of cloth or linen. In this way the wealth of the Spanish Jews crumbled into nothingness, and could not help them in the day of their need. Torquemada who, on this occasion, surpassed even his usual cruelty, forbade the Christians to have any intercourse with Jews. In his own provinces, King Ferdinand placed the property of the banished Jews under attachment not only to cover their debts, but also to satisfy the claims which the monasteries pretended to have against them.

In this hour of despair Torquemada ordered the Dominicans to call upon the Jews to submit to baptism and to remain in the country. The rabbis, however, exhorted the communities to remain steadfast in their faith to withstand their trials and tribulations, and to put their faith in God who had so often delivered them. But those solemn exhortations on the part of the rabbis were superfluous. Every Jew encouraged the other to remain steadfast and loyal: "Let us be firm in our religion and in the faith of our fathers. If they let us live we shall live, if they kill us we shall die. We must not desecrate the covenant of our fathers, let not our hearts despair and let us walk in the name of our God." Were they to embrace Christianity in order to fall into the clutches of the inquisition? The cross had lost its attractiveness even for the most lukewarm Jews when they saw on what pretexts their coreligionists were being condemned to the stake. A year before the edict of expulsion was issued, thirty-two New-Christians were burned alive in Seville, sixteen were burned in effigy and six hundred and twenty-five were condemned to humiliating expiations. Moreover, the Jews well knew the duplicity by means of which Torquemada decoyed his victims. Many Maranos of Seville, Cordova, and Jaen had fled to Granada and then returned to Judaism. After the conquest of that city, Torquemada issued a call to them to return to the Church, promising them kind treatment and secret absolution. Several of these Maranos listened to his kind words, proceeded to Toledo and—were burned at the stake. Hence, despite the preachments of the Dominicans, and despite their infinitely desperate condition but few Jews, and these only among the weathy and educated, embraced Christianity in the year of the expulsion. Of the well-known men of that period, only the wealthy chief tax-collector and chief-rabbi, Abraham Senior, with his sons and son-in-law Meir, submitted to baptism. Report had it that Don Abraham submitted to baptism with despair because the queen who could not dispense with her finance minister threatened to inflict even greater miseries upon the departing Jews if he refused to yield. The court was, in fact, overjoyed at the conversion of Senior and his family. Ferdinand and Isabella themselves and the cardinal stood god-parents at their conversion. The neophytes assumed the name of Coronel, and their descendants later on achieved positions of eminence in the service of the state.

The common misfortune and the common sorrow produced a feeling of the sincerest brotherliness among the Jews of Spain before their departure. The rich among them shared fraternally with the poor whatever was left to them of their dwindled fortunes, and provided for the cost of their journey. The aged rabbi, Isaac Aboab, accompanied by thirty prominent men, proceeded in advance to Portugal, for the purpose of negotiating with King John II in behalf of the Spanish emigrants for permission either to settle in Portugal or to pass through his land; and they succeeded in concluding a relatively favorable compact with him. As the day of departure drew nearer, the grief at the separation from the land which they loved with a fantastic love grew keener. The graves of their forefathers were dear to them above all else, and the thought of the separation from them filled them with profound sorrow. The Jews of Segovia spent the three days preceding their departure on the graves of their fathers, mingled their tears with the dust of the graves, and touched the hearts of the Catholics with their heart-rending lamentations.

Finally the day arrived when they had to grasp the wanderer's staff. They had obtained a reprieve of two days, and instead of leaving on the 31st of July they departed on the 2nd of August, which happened to coincide with the Ninth of Ab, the day that called to mind the departure of the ancient glory of Israel, and that had so often proved a day of sorrow and grief for the sons of Jacob. At least three hundred thousand Jews left the country they had loved so ardently, and wandered in part to the north, to the contiguous kingdom of Navarre, in part to the south, in order to reach Africa, Italy or Turkey, but for the most part to Portugal. To keep the multitudes from giving way to their melancholy thoughts that might lead one or another on their departure to change his resolution and to submit to baptism in order to be able to remain in Spain, and to make them forget their poignant grief for a while, some rabbis ordered the playing of noisy music with fife and drum.

By the expulsion of the Jews Spain lost a twentieth part, and the most active, industrious and educated element of her population, the solid middle-class that not only creates wealth, but sets it in circulation like the blood in an organism. For there were among the Jews not only capitalists, merchants, farmers, physicians and scholars, but also artisans, armorers, metal workers of all kinds and certainly no idlers who spent the entire day in siestas as the Spaniards did. The discovery of America at that time would have enabled the Jews to render Spain the richest, most flourishing and strongest state, one that could easily vie with Italy. Torquemada, however, preferred to convert Spain


הג' מו"ה יצחק אבוהב הספרדי
בעל המחבר ספר מנורת המאור

Isaac Abohab

into an inferno ringing with the cries of burning victims. The injurious effects upon the Christians of the departure of the Jews were palpable at once. The buoyancy of spirit, the alertness and the flourishing culture departed from Spain with the Jews. The small towns in which the presence of the Jews had infused some life became quickly depopulated, sank into insignificance, lost the sense of independence and freedom, and yielded ever more readily to the brutal despotism of the kings and the stupid fanaticism of the priests. The Spanish grandees complained soon after the expulsion of the Jews that their towns had become insignificant and depopulated, and remarked that they would have offered resistance to the royal command had they realized the injurious effects of the expulsion. The lack of physicians was felt above all. The city of Vittoria was compelled to import a physician from a distance and to pay him a high annual salary; in other cities, the population in case of sickness had to resort to quacks, or to hypocritical or self-deluded exorcists. In a word, Spain was making rapid strides toward barbarism as a result of the expulsion of the Jews, and the moneys which flowed into the mother-country from the American possessions tended only to make its inhabitants more indolent, more stupid and more servile. The name Jew gradually disappeared from the land wherein that people had played such an important part and whose literature was so intimately interwoven with Jewish elements that it constantly reminded its educated men of the Jews. Schools, hospitals and everything that the Jews could not or were not permitted to take with them were confiscated by the king, and the synagogs were converted into churches, monasteries, or schools that served as instruments for the stupefaction of the people. The magnificent synagog of Toledo, erected by the Jewish statesman Don Samuel Allavi, was converted into a church (de nuestra Señora, San Benito), and constitutes to this day the pride of the city with its Moorish style, its graceful columns and its roomy chambers.

Nevertheless, Spain did not rid herself of her Jews entirely. Many of them remained who bore the mask of Christianity, the so-called New-Christians, and these rendered every possible aid to their departing brethren. Many of them took the gold and the silver of the emigrants in their charge, and kept them until they had an opportunity of returning these valuables through some reliable person, or gave their owners a bill of exchange on some foreign merchant. Such aid often proved illusory, for as soon as Ferdinand and Isabella were informed of such a transaction they confiscated the valuables left by the Jews, and sought to stop payment on the bills of exchange. But despite these difficulties, many Maranos assisted their exiled coreligionists. They persecuted with relentless severity those who had treated the exiles with inhuman cruelty, and found occasion to deliver them into the hands of the inquisition—the instrument turning upon its inventor. But they had to be even more circumspect than heretofore, dared not commit the slightest offence, had to cross themselves, count their beads and mumble their paternosters all the more zealously, the more loyal they remained to Judaism in their hearts. At times, in unguarded moments, some Maranos betrayed their feelings in words, and such utterances naturally subjected to investigations, imprisonment, torture and autos-da-fé not only the Marano who betrayed himself but also his relatives, friends and anyone connected with him who possessed property. As a matter of fact, the solemn spectacle of human sacrifices had become a necessity to the populace that had become brutalized by the frequent sight of the agonies of the victims of the inquisition. In the course of the fourteen years of Torquemada's inquisitor-generalship (1485-1498) at least two thousand Jews were burned as impenitent sinners. Torquemada, in fact, was so hated that he lived in constant fear of death, and had to surround himself with a bodyguard (familares) of fifty horsemen and two hundred foot soldiers whenever he appeared in public. His successor, Deza, set up even more stakes; but it soon came to pass when the holy murderers turned upon one another, Deza himself was charged with the crime of being a secret Jew. And when the inquisition turned also upon the Moriscos who remained behind and upon the followers of Luther, the fury of the holy office converted Spain literally into a human shambles. Justly did nearly all European princes and even the parliament of Paris rebuke Ferdinand and Isabella for their perversity in expelling such a useful class of people. The then sultan of Turkey, Bayazet, remarked: "You call Ferdinand a wise king, him who impoverished his own country and enriched mine!"

Comparatively happy, for a short time at least, was the lot of the Jews of Northern Spain, of Catalonia and Aragon, who had sought refuge in the contiguous Navarre. Here they had at least prospects for safety until they had an opportunity to look about for other places of refuge. Both the king and the people of Navarre successfully resisted the introduction of the inquisition in that country. When several Maranos, who were implicated in the murder of the inquisitor Arbues, fled to this kingdom, and the inquisitors demanded their surrender and sent its officers thither to apprehend them, the city of Tudela declared that it would not tolerate such unjustifiable attacks upon persons who had sought asylum within its walls, and shut its gates in the face of the inquisitorial hangmen, despite the threats of King Ferdinand. Although a number of cities in Navarre refused to receive the exiles, twelve thousand Spanish fugitives were admitted into Navarre, mostly under the protection of the Count of Lerin. But the rest they enjoyed in Navarre was of short duration. At the repeated and violent pressure brought to bear by King Ferdinand, who pursued the exiles with bitter hatred, the king of Navarre gave them the choice between expulsion and baptism. The majority embraced Christianity because they were given but a little time for preparation and no time for deliberation. Even in Tudela, a community famous for its piety, one hundred and eighty families submitted to baptism.

Fortunate were those Jews who did not delude themselves with the vain hope that the edict of expulsion would be revoked and who emigrated to Italy, Africa or Turkey even before the expiration of the time allotted to them in Spain. Opportunities for emigration were not lacking. The Jews of Spain enjoyed then such a far-reaching reputation and their expulsion had created such a sensation in Europe that a large number of vessels, Spanish as well as Italian, from Genoa and Venice, gathered at the Spanish ports to convey the exiles to their various destinations. The owners of ships did a thriving business. Many Jews of Aragon, Catalonia and Valencia cast their eyes upon Naples, and sent their representatives to the then King Ferdinand I to seek admission into his country. This prince, who was free from all prejudice against the Jews, who felt a certain sympathy for their misfortune, and who possibly expected also that his country would greatly benefit both industrially and intellectually by the immigration of the Spanish Jews, opened his country to them and bade them welcome. Many thousand Jews accordingly landed in the port of Naples and were well received. The Neapolitan Jewish community treated their newly arrived brethren fraternally, paid their passage for the poor, and provided them with their momentary necessities.

Abrabanel and his family also found refuge in Naples. At first he lived in retirement here and continued his commentary on the Books of Kings, interrupted as a result of his official duties in Spain. But as soon as the king of Naples learned of his presence he invited him to his court, and appointed him to some office, probably in the ministry of finance. The king of Naples, prompted by his noble impulses or as a result of Abrabanel's intercession, evinced a touching humaneness toward the immigrated Jews that presented a striking contrast to the cruelty of Ferdinand and Isabella. As a result probably of the overcrowding of the ships, the Spanish exiles contracted a fatal disease that broke out into an epidemic six months after their settlement in Naples, and claimed many victims among them. Fearing that the people would rise against the Jews in consequence of this epidemic, King Ferdinand gave the latter the hint to bury their dead quietly and at night. But even when the epidemic grew in malignity and could no longer be concealed and the nobility and the people clamored for the expulsion of the newcomers, King Ferdinand refused to entertain such an inhuman request, and is said even to have threatened to resign his throne if any harm befell the Jews. The king, on the contrary, erected hospitals for the afflicted Jews, sent them physicians, and provided for the unfortunates most generously for an entire year.

Fortunate were those exiles who succeeded in reaching the port of Pisa, where a hearty reception awaited them. The sons of Yehiel of Pisa, the old friend of Abrabanel's, had, in a measure, made that harbor their headquarters in order to be on hand to receive, care and provide for the immigrants, or to forward them to other destinations. In other places, however, the exiles met with a horrible fate. Those who did not succumb to the famine and pestilence perished by the hands of brutal men. A report spread that the Jews had swallowed gold and silver coins which they were not permitted to take with them from Spain. The cannibals accordingly ripped open their bodies to search for coins in the intestines. The Genoese captains treated the exiles who entrusted themselves to their care with particular barbarity. Some of their passengers they threw into the sea and watched their agonies with evident enjoyment. On the African coast torture and death awaited them at the hands of the barbaric Berbers and the zealous Christians.

Those who arrived in the harbor of Genoa had to cope with a new misfortune. The laws of this flourishing commercial city did not permit a Jew to remain in the city longer than three days. Inasmuch as the ships that were to transport the Jews to other ports needed refitting, the authorities permitted the Spanish exiles to remain not in the city, but on the pier until the ships were ready to sail. The wretched exiles looked like living skeletons—pale, emaciated, hollow-eyed. The starved children begged bread at the church doors and submitted to baptism for a piece of bread; and Christians mingled among the Jews with the cross in one hand and with bread in the other in order to entice the Jews to conversion by this means. As stated above, those who landed in Genoa were to be permitted to remain at the pier only a short time; but a portion of the winter passed ere the ships were refitted, and the longer the exiles were forced to remain the smaller grew their number as a result of the exposure, famine, disease and conversion, particularly of the younger element. Other cities of Italy would not permit the exiles to land even for a short time, partly because that year happened to be a year of famine, and partly also for fear of the epidemic that afflicted the Jews.

The remnant that reached Rome from Genoa met with still more bitter experience. Their own coreligionists conspired against their admission for fear that the influx of new settlers would hurt the business of the old settlers. The Roman Jews collected a thousand ducats with which to bribe the then pope, the notorious Alexander VI, to bar the gates of the city against the Spanish Jews. But this otherwise conscienceless prelate was so indignant at the heartlessness displayed by the Roman Jews toward their own coreligionists that he ordered the expulsion of all Roman Jews. It cost the Roman community an additional two thousand ducats for the revocation of this order, and it was compelled to receive the immigrants.

The Greek islands of Corfu, Crete and others were filled with Spanish Jews who had come thither voluntarily or were sold there as slaves. The communities of these islands made every possible effort to gather funds for the ransom of their coreligionists. Persians who happened to be in Crete bought Spanish exiles in the expectation that the Persian Jews would ransom their coreligionists at a high price. Elkanah Kapsali, the heart of the Cretan community, was indefatigable in his exertions to collect funds for the needs of the Spanish Jews.

The most fortunate among the exiles were those who succeeded in reaching the border of Turkey, for the Turkish sultan, Bayazet II, proved himself not only a humane but also a wise and prudent monarch. More intelligent than the Christian princes, he could appreciate the secret treasures which the poverty-stricken Spanish Jews carried with them, not in their intestines, but in their brains, and he wished to utilize them for the benefit of his country. He therefore issued a proclamation in the European provinces of his empire that the Jews must be received with the utmost hospitality, and threatened with death any one who would mistreat or oppress them. The chief rabbi of Turkey, Moses Kapsali, was indefatigable in his acts of benevolence toward the Spanish exiles who reached Turkey as beggars or slaves. He traveled from community to community, and imposed a special tax upon the wealthy Jews for the redemption of the Spanish captives. He had no occasion to employ force, either, for the Turkish Jews contributed gladly to the relief of the victims of Christian fanaticism. Thousands of Spanish Jews thus settled in Turkey, and before a generation passed they became the leaders of Turkish Jewry, and transformed Turkey into an Oriental Spain, as it were.

Fortune seemed to smile at first also upon those Spanish Jews who had found refuge in Portugal. The delusion that their indispensability to Spain would induce Ferdinand and Isabella to recall them ere long led many exiles to prefer to seek refuge in the neighboring Portugal. If the worst came to the worst, the exiles thought, they could easily find plenty of ships in Portugal to transport them to Africa or Italy. As King John II of Portugal was in need of funds for the prosecution of his contemplated African war, he readily consented to admit the exiles into Portugal for money, despite the protest of the majority of his counselors who were animated by Jew-hatred. At first, in the negotiations between King John and the representatives of the exiles, the question of the permanent settlement of the Spanish exiles in Portugal came up for consideration. But such an arrangement seemed to meet with opposition on the part of the Portuguese Jews themselves, who feared that the large influx of immigrants would swell the Jewish population out of all proportion to the Christian population of that small country, that the impoverished exiles would become an unbearable burden upon the Portuguese communities, and that the king, who at best was neither humane nor particularly friendly to the Jews, would in time turn against all Portuguese Jewry. The leaders of the Portuguese communities met in conference, and many of them proposed that they themselves take steps to prevent the admission of the Spanish exiles. The noble and aged Don Joseph ibn Yahya pleaded ardently for his unfortunate brethren, but no heed was paid to his words. The question of the permanent settlement of the exiles was abandoned, and the negotiations centered solely upon that of their temporary sojourn in Portugal. King John finally agreed to admit the Spanish Jews upon their payment of a capitation tax each of eight gold crusados ($3.36) in four instalments. Six hundred families were permitted to remain permanently upon the payment of one hundred crusados each ($120.00). The same privilege was conferred upon mechanics, metal workers and armorers, though they were required to pay four crusados each ($1.68). The balance were to remain in the country only eight months, but the king bound himself to provide ships at a cheap fare that were to transport them to other countries. Those who would be found in the country after the expiration of the eight months, or those who could show no receipt for their capitation tax, were to be reduced to slavery. As a result of this agreement, a large multitude of Spanish Jews, estimated at ninety-five thousand souls, crossed the border into Portugal. The king assigned the immigrants certain cities for their temporary residence, for which they had to pay an additional tax to those cities.

Small as was the number of the Jews in this small country, several of them distinguished themselves in the field of the sciences, and King John II, much as he disliked them, utilized them for his own advantage. King John himself was attended by several Jewish physicians, and the country derived still greater benefits from Jewish mathematicians and astronomers. The feverish restlessness to discover new countries that seized upon Portugal lent a practical value to the sciences of mathematics and astronomy which were hitherto regarded as mere hobbies of idlers and in which educated Jews of the Pyrenean Peninsula excelled. As early as the thirteenth century, Zag ibn Said, a cantor of the Toledo synagog, prepared astronomic tables, under the name of Alfonso Tables, for the guidance of mariners, which were adopted in Germany, France, England and Italy, and were changed but slightly since. In the astronomical congress which King John of Portugal summoned when he was on the point of sending his ships upon a voyage of exploration to India two Jews participated: a certain Moses and the king's physician, Joseph (José) Vecinho or de Viseu. The latter based his astronomic calculations upon the tables of seven planets prepared for the bishop of Salamanca by the Jewish chronicler Abraham Zacuto; and, in conjunction with other astronomers, he improved the astrolabe, an instrument for obtaining the altitudes of planets and stars which was so essential for navigators and which enabled Vasco da Gama to achieve the passage to India by sea around the Cape of Good Hope. King John II utilized also the geographical knowledge and the versatility of two Jews—Rabbi Abraham de Beya and Joseph Zapateiro de Lamego—to send them to Asia to bring tidings from the explorers who were sent to discover the mythical land of Prester John. However, though King John thus utilized the able and learned Jews for his purposes, he had little love for the Jewish people. In the same year (1487) in which he sent those two Jews on their missions to Asia, he appointed an inquisitorial commission, at the request of Pope Innocence VIII, to investigate the conduct of the Maranos who had fled to Portugal from Spain, and, like Ferdinand and Isabella, he ordered the burning or the life-long imprisonment of those who were guilty of practising the rites of Judaism. When several Maranos crossed over into his African possessions and there returned to Judaism publicly, he issued an edict forbidding Maranos on pain of death and of the confiscation of their property to emigrate by way of the sea. It was on the whim of such a harsh and heartless monarch that the life or death of a hundred thousand Spanish-Jewish exiles depended!

Not alone evil men, but nature, too, conspired against the unfortunates of Portugal. Soon after their arrival in Portugal, a malignant epidemic broke out that slew thousands of them. The Portuguese population that likewise suffered from the pestilence believed that the Jews had imported it, and murmured against the king for admitting the accursed Jews in the country. For this reason, King John insisted more strictly than he would have done otherwise upon the fulfillment of the condition that the survivors leave Portugal within eight months. At first, true to his promise, he placed at their disposal ships at a cheap rate of passage, and ordered the captains to treat them kindly and to transport them to their respective destinations. But the captains, prompted for the most part by Jew-hatred and by greed, paid little attention to the king's commands, once they were out at sea. They demanded more money than was originally agreed upon, and extorted it from their helpless passengers; or kept them on the water until their provisions gave out and then demanded such exorbitant sums of money for food that the unfortunates were compelled at last to exchange their very garments for bread, and were finally landed in some harbor almost naked. Wives and girls were dishonored in the presence of their husbands and parents. The brutal sailors disembarked some of their passengers at some desolate point and exposed them to starvation, to despair or to the fury of savage Moors, who made them captives.

When the report of the barbarities committed by the Portuguese sailors reached Portugal, the remaining Jews were afraid to take passage on ships; nor did they possess enough money to pay for their passage and for necessary provisions with the food for the journey. They therefore postponed their departure from day to day in the hope that the king would temper justice with mercy and permit them to remain in Portugal. But King John's heart knew no mercy. He maintained that a larger number of exiles had immigrated into Portugal than was stipulated, and he insisted upon a literal fulfillment of the contract. Those who remained in Portugal after the expiration of the eight months were actually reduced to slavery, given away or sold to nobles who selected this or that Jew (1493). In addition, King John issued an edict that the parents who had been reduced to slavery were to be deprived of their children between the ages of three and ten, and that the latter be sent to the newly discovered San Thomas or Lost Islands to be reared there as Christians. The heart-rending shrieks of the mothers, the cries of the children, and the rage of the fathers who tore their hair for grief, did not avail to induce the monster to revoke his edict. The mothers pleaded for permission to accompany their children. One mother who was robbed of seven children threw herself at the king's feet as he was leaving the church and begged him to leave her the youngest child at least. Don John ordered her dragged away, and remarked: "She moans like a bitch when her pups are taken away." No wonder that some mothers jumped into the sea with their children to find a common grave with their dear ones. The Islands of St. Thomas whither the children were banished were inhabited by lizards, poisonous snakes and criminals who were transported thither from Portugal as a punishment. Most of the Jewish children perished on the journey or fell as a prey to wild beasts. Of the survivors, brothers and sisters married later on, ignorant of their blood relationship. It is possible that the king's morbidness and irritability since the death of his only legitimate son was responsible for his barbarity toward the Jews.

The death of John II (end of October, 1495) and the ascension of his cousin Manoel, who was an enlightened man and a lover of the sciences, brought a change for the better in the condition of the Portuguese Jews as well as in that of the remnant of the Spanish exiles. This king who did not approve of the enslavement of the Spanish Jews, restored them all to liberty, and declined the gold which they offered him as a token of their gratitude, in the hope, as his biographer states, that he might induce the Jews to embrace Christianity by treating them with kindness. The Jewish mathematician and astronomer Abraham Zacuto, who had emigrated from Northern Spain into Lisbon was appointed by Manoel as court astrologer. But though Zacuto was narrow and shared in the superstitions of his age, he possessed a profound knowledge of astronomy, wrote a work on that subject (outside of his astronomical tables), and invented an accurate metal astrolabe for the use of navigators in place of the unreliable wooden instrument used hitherto. Zacuto, who possessed also a wide though superficial knowledge of history, acted also as Manoel's official chronicler. Under King Manoel, in the course of whose reign Portugal acquired possessions in India and America, the Jews were in a position to breathe somewhat freely. He did not permit the fanatic friars to incite the people against them.

But the happiness of the Jews under Manoel was of short duration; the Spanish court soon cast its dark shadow over Portugal also. As soon as the youthful king of Portugal acceded to the throne, Ferdinand and Isabella determined to contract a marriage alliance with him in order to convert their hostile neighbor into a friend and ally. It was at first proposed to him that he marry their younger daughter Johanna, who later gained fame for her jealousy and crazy conduct. Manoel, however, preferred her older sister Isabella II, the youthful widow of the Infant of Portugal. Isabella, it is true, was decidedly averse to contract a second marriage, but was persuaded by her father-confessor to change her mind when he pointed out to her the opportunity that such an alliance would give her to promote the glory of Christianity. The Spanish court looked with ill-favor upon the kind of treatment given the Jewish and the Mohammedan fugitives by King Manoel. Ferdinand and Isabella therefore promised him the hand of their oldest daughter on condition that he enter into an alliance with Spain against Charles VII of France, and that he expel from Portugal all the Jews, both native and the Spanish immigrants. Both conditions were disagreeable to Manoel, for he stood on friendly terms with France, and he was deriving considerable benefits from the Jews, both from their gold, their commercial activities and their knowledge. The grandees whom the king consulted were divided in their opinions, and the king himself vacillated for some time because his noble nature abhorred all cruelty and the violation of a promise, when Isabella decided the issue. This princess who cherished a fanatic, almost personal hatred against the Jews believed that the misfortunes that visited King John II in his last days were due to his admission of the Jews into Portugal, and she was fearful that her marriage with Manoel would be accompanied by another misfortune if the Jews were tolerated in Portugal any longer. King Manoel was, in consequence, torn by conflicting feelings and thoughts. Honor, statesmanship and humanity demanded that the Jews be not cast out helplessly, but the hand of Isabella and the hope of possessing the Spanish crown could be obtained only by the misery of the Jews. Love or self-interest finally turned the scale in favor of hatred. When the king was awaiting his bride on the border, he received a letter from her that she would not set foot upon Portuguese soil before that country was purged of the "accursed" Jews.

The marriage contract between Don Manoel and Isabella was thus sealed with the misery of the Jews. This contract was signed on the 30th of November, 1496, and as early as the 24th of the following month the king issued an edict giving the Jews and the Moors of his kingdom the choice between baptism and emigration within a specified time on pain of death. To allay his conscience, the king proceeded at first with kindness. He permitted them to remain until October of the following year to enable them to make the necessary preparations, and designated three ports—Lisbon, Oporto, and Setubal—as the points whence they could freely depart. In accordance with the perverted notion of his age, he sought to attract the Jews to Christianity by the promises of honors and advantages, but very few submitted to baptism at first.

But Manoel's very mildness proved disastrous to the Jews. Inasmuch as they were given a long time for their preparations, and were permitted to take their valuables with them, they believed that there was no occasion for haste, and that they could postpone their departure. The king might change his mind, and they had friends at court who were exerting themselves in their behalf. Moreover, the winter months were not adapted for travel on sea. The majority, therefore, delayed their departure until spring. Meanwhile, King Manoel did indeed change his mind, but only to the undoing of the Jews. It vexed him that so few of them had decided to accept Christianity. Moreover, he did not like to see the Jews depart with their wealth and valuables, and was scheming to detain them, as Christians, of course. If he took the first step with reluctance, the second was easy.

King Manoel summoned his council of state and submitted to them the question of the advisability of forcing the Jews to accept baptism. To the honor of the Portuguese clergy it must be said that they were frankly and decidedly against the proposition. Bishop Fernando Coutinho of Algarvia cited ecclesiastical authorities and papal bulls against the forcible conversion of the Jews because Christianity requires a free and not a forced confession. But Manoel was so determined upon retaining the industrious Jews that he declared at last that he cared little for precedents and authorities, and would act in accordance with his own impulses. At the advice of a malicious Jewish apostate, Levi ben Shem-Tob, probably called Antonio, as a Christian, who was the author of a venomous anti-Jewish book, the king ordered the closing of all the synagogs and forbade the Jews to assemble for public prayer on Sabbaths and festivals. As this order had little effect since devout Jews used their homes as places of worship though they subjected themselves to cruel punishments for it, Manoel, again at the advice of the apostate, issued a secret order (beginning of April, 1497) that on Easter Sunday all Jewish children under the age of fourteen, throughout the country, be taken from their parents by force and baptized. Despite the secrecy with which the preparations for the execution of this order were carried on, several Jews learned of it and made arrangements for a hasty departure in order to save themselves and their children from "pollution by baptism." When Manoel heard of it he ordered that the forcible baptism of the children be executed at once. Heart-rending scenes were enacted in the cities that contained Jews when their children were seized and dragged to the baptismal fonts. Parents clasped their children in their arms, and children clung convulsively to their parents, but were torn apart by lashes and blows. In their despair at being separated from their children forever, some parents smothered their children in their embrace, or threw them into wells and streams and then committed suicide. Bishop Coutinho tells: "I saw with my own eyes children dragged by the hair to the baptismal fonts; their fathers with covered heads and with cries of anguish accompanied their children, and protested at the very altars against this cruel forcible conversion. I have seen still other unspeakable cruelties inflicted upon them." The horrible manner in which a noble and cultured Jew, Isaac ibn Zachin, killed his children and himself lingered long in the memory of his contemporaries. Even Christians were stirred to pity and mercy at the cries and the tears of Jewish fathers, mothers and children—and hid some unfortunates in their houses to save them, at least momentarily, despite the prohibition to render assistance to the Jews. But Manoel and his young wife Isabella knew no pity. The baptized children who were given Christian names were distributed in various cities and raised in the Christian faith. Either in obedience to a secret order or in an excess of zeal, the minions of the king did not confine their work to children, but forced baptism also upon youths and maidens up to twenty years of age.

It is probable that many Jews of Portugal submitted to baptism on this occasion in order to retain their children. This, however, did not satisfy the king, who was determined, solely out of political considerations, that the Jews become Christians and remain in the country. With this object in view, he violated his promises, and when the time of their departure drew nearer, he ordered that the Jews be permitted to sail only from the port of Lisbon and not from the two additional ports previously assigned them. All who wished to emigrate, about twenty thousand souls, were thus compelled to gather in Lisbon. The monster, it is true, assigned them residences in the capital, but he placed so many obstacles in the way of their embarkation that they could not leave before the month of October, when all who were still found on Portuguese soil were to lose their lives or at least their liberty. Thereupon the king shut all the Jews in an open square, like cattle in a pen, declared them his slaves, and gave them the choice between voluntary acceptance of Christianity, in which case they would receive honors and wealth, and forcible baptism. Those who remained steadfast were denied food and water for three days and nights, but as the majority preferred death by starvation to disloyalty to their God, Manoel ordered them dragged from their pen to the churches with ropes or by their hair and beards. Some Jews hurled themselves from windows and shattered their limbs; others tore themselves loose from their captors and threw themselves into wells. Some killed themselves in the very churches. One father covered his children with a praying shawl and killed them and then himself. Manoel's cruelty to the Jews is the more glaring when compared with his treatment of the Moors. They also were compelled to leave Portugal, but no obstacles were thrown in their way for fear that the Mohammedan princes of Africa and Turkey would avenge the blood of the Moors on the Christians of their domains. But because the Jews had no avenger on earth, because they were helpless, Manoel, whom historians called the Great, permitted himself to commit such atrocities against them.

In this way many native and immigrated Spanish Jews were led into the fold of Christianity, which they openly despised, as Christian contemporaries themselves acknowledged with a feeling of shame. Among these there were several who escaped and later on became respected rabbinical authorities, such as Levi ben Habib, afterward rabbi in Jerusalem. Those who escaped with their lives and with their faith regarded it as a wonderful act of divine providence. Isaac ben Joseph Caro, who had moved from Toledo to Portugal and there lost all his sons who were "as handsome as princes," thanks God for His mercy in enabling him to escape to Turkey despite all the dangers of the sea. Abraham Zacuto and his son Samuel were also in imminent danger, although or because the former was Manoel's astrologer and chronicler. Both, however, succeeded in escaping from Portugal. They fell twice into captivity, and finally settled in Tunis.

The excitement which the forcible conversion of the Jews produced in Portugal did not subside so soon. Those who had submitted to baptism out of love for their children or out of fear of death sent a deputation to the then pope Alexander VI, from whom anything could be obtained for a consideration, in the hope of inducing him to annul their forcible conversion. As the deputies did not forget to take their purses with them, the pope and the sacred colleges received them favorably and the cardinal de Sancta Anastasia took them under his especial protection.

The Spanish ambassador, Garcilaso, at the behest of the Spanish court, exerted himself to thwart their efforts. But the affairs of the Portuguese Jews must have taken a favorable turn after all, for King Manoel decided to make some concessions. He issued an edict (May 30, 1497) in which he granted amnesty to all forcibly baptized Jews, and exempted them from the jurisdiction of the inquisition for a period of twenty years, since a considerable time must elapse before the Jews could outgrow their old practices and accustom themselves to the Catholic faith. Even at the expiration of this period, those who were charged with Judaizing were to be given a fair trial, with a regular examination of witnesses, and the property of those who were found guilty was not to be confiscated, as was done in Spain, but was to descend to their heirs. The edicts also granted the baptized physicians and surgeons who did not understand Latin the right to use Hebrew text-books. This edict thus practically authorized the forcibly baptized to practice Judaism in secret, without fear of punishment, as well as to retain their literature, for who was there in Portugal at that time to disinguish one Hebrew book from another? Talmudic scholars were thus enabled to continue their Talmudic studies as heretofore, while wearing the mask of Christianity. These exemptions, however, applied solely to the Portuguese Maranos, but not to those who had fled to Portugal from Spain. In the marriage contract between Manoel and the fanatic Isabella it was expressly stipulated (Aug., 1497) that all Jews who were to seek safety in Portugal after they had been condemned by the inquisition were to be expelled within a month.

Many thousands of Portuguese Jews thus feigned Christianity, but with a firm determination to embrace every opportunity to emigrate and, in a free country, to return to the faith of their fathers which had become all the more precious to them. "Their bodies," says the poet Samuel Usque, "submitted to baptism, but their souls clung to the Law of Moses." A few Jews still remained in Portugal who refused to submit to baptism. Among these was Simon Maimi, probably the last chief-rabbi (Arrabi mor) of Portugal, his wife, his sons-in-law, and several others. They were placed in rigid confinement, were subjected to the most cruel torture, and were immured up to their necks for three days, in order to force them to submit to baptism; but all in vain. Three succumbed to the torture, among them Simon Maimi, and two Maranos risked their lives to give the body of the martyr a Jewish burial, though it was severely forbidden to bury the Jewish victims by the hands of others than hangmen. Several other Maranos also accompanied the remains of the quietly lamented saint to their last resting place, and there performed the last sad rites. Probably after the death of his wife, the cause of all his inhumanity against the Jews (Isabella died Aug. 24, 1498, in giving birth to the heir of the throne of Portugal and Spain; the Infant died two years later), Manoel permitted the few Jews who remained steadfast in their faith to leave the country. Among these were Abraham Saba, preacher and cabalistic writer, whose two children were forcibly baptized and taken from him, Shem-Tob Lerna and Jacob Lual. But the associates and sons-in-law of Simon Maimi were still kept in confinement for a long time, were afterward sent to Arzilla (in Africa), were forced to work there in the trenches on Sabbaths, and finally died the death of martyrs. Thus acted the adherents of the religion of love!

Eighty years later, Manoel's great-grandson, the adventurous King Sebastian, led the flower of the Portuguese people into Africa, bent upon new conquests. In a single battle the power of Portugal was broken, the nobles were slain or made captives. The captives were brought to Fez and offered as slaves in the market place to the grand-children of the Portuguese Jews who had been so unspeakably mistreated. The humbled Portuguese nobles and knights regarded themselves fortunate if they were acquired as slaves by Jews whose kindness and humane feelings they knew. Thus acted the adherents of the God of vengeance!

CHAPTER VI

NEW MIGRATIONS OF JEWS AND MARANOS

(1497-1520)

The expulsion of the Jews from the Pyrenean Peninsula, an act which was as stupid as inhuman, proved in many respects a turning point in the history of all Jewry. It brought in its train far-reaching, mostly dismal, consequences not alone for the exiles but also for the entire Jewish people. The glory of Israel had departed, his pride was humbled thereby. The grief over this tragic experience overwhelmed the souls of the Jews in all countries where the news had penetrated. Every one felt as though the sons of Zion had been sent into exile and into misery for the third time. Whether it was due to imagination or to pride that the Spanish (Sephardic *) Jews claimed descent from the noblest tribe, and believed that there were among them lineal descendants of King David; suffice it to say that in the eyes of all Jewry they were actually regarded as the noblest, as a Jewish aristocracy,

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* The Word Sepharad in the Bible was conventionally applied to the entire Pyrenean Peninsula, so that Sephardim embreced all the Jews of Spain, Castile, Aragon, Leon and Navarre, as well as those of Portugal

as it were. And this aristocracy it was that met with such a tragic fate. Exile, forcible baptisms, death in every horrible form, despair, hunger, pestilence, fire, shipwreck, all conspired to reduce their number from hundreds of thousands to hardly one-tenth thereof, and the remnant wandered hither and thither like spectres, driven from land to land; and they, the princes among the Jews, had now to knock at the doors of their brethren like beggars. The thirty million ducats, at the lowest estimate, which the Spanish Jews alone had in their possession at the time of the expulsion, melted away, and the exiles thus stood in utter destitution in a hostile world that valued the Jew only for his money. Many German Jews also were expelled at the same time from several eastern and western cities, but their wretchedness was not as keen as that of the Sephardic Jews. They had known neither the sweetness of a fatherland nor the comforts of life; they were more inured to hardships, they were at least accustomed to humiliating and impudent treatment.

Half a century after the expulsion of the Jews from Spain and Portugal, fugitives—here a group, there a family or isolated individuals—are met everywhere. It is a sort of migration of nations on a small scale that moved eastward to Turkey for the most part, as though the Jews were destined to draw near to their ancient home once more. But their wanderings until they succeeded in finding permanent homes and in finding a resting place were rendered tragic by misfortunes of all sorts, by humiliations and outrages that were worse than death.

The noble family of Abrabanel did not escape the misfortunes that overtook the other exiles. The father, Isaac Abrabanel, who occupied a position of eminence in the Neapolitan court under Ferdinand I and his son Alfonso, had to leave Naples at the approach of the French, fled to Sicily together with his royal patron, then sought refuge on the Island of Corfu, and finally settled in Monopoli (Apulia). The wealth he had acquired in the service of the Spanish and Portuguese courts melted away, his wife and children were separated from him and scattered, and the only comfort he found in his gloomy life was his occupation with the study of the Scriptures. His oldest son, Judah Leon Medigo Abrabanel, sojourned then in Genoa, where he absorbed himself in scientific studies despite the unsettled state of his life and the grief that gnawed at his heart at the loss of his little son, who was forcibly taken away from him in Portugal and reared as a Christian. Judah Leon was more cultured and a greater thinker than his father. He practised medicine only as a means of livelihood (whence he received the name of Medigo), but his favorite studies were astronomy, mathematics and philosophy. He became physician-in-ordinary (1505-07) to the Spanish captain-general Gonsalvo de Cordova, the conqueror and viceroy of Naples, who did not share in the anti-Jewish prejudices of his masters. When King Ferdinand, after the conquest of Naples (1504) ordered the expulsion of the Jews from that kingdom, the captain-general objected with the remark that there were but few Jews in the kingdom of Naples altogether, and that their expulsion would prove disadvantageous to the country because they would settle in Venice and transfer their energy and their wealth thither. In consequence of his objection, the Jews were permitted to remain in the kingdom of Naples a few years longer. But Ferdinand established an inquisition in Benevent to proceed against the Maranos who had fled to Naples from Spain and Portugal.

Isaac II, the second of Isaac Abrabanel's sons, practised medicine first in Reggio and later in Venice, where his father joined him. The youngest son, Samuel, was the most fortunate, for, at the time of the expulsion, he was still in Salonica, whither his father had sent him to acquire a Talmudic education. In his old age, Isaac entered upon a political career once more. While in Venice he had the occasion to settle a commercial dispute between Portugal and the Venetian Republic. On this occasion several influential senators recognized Isaac Abrabanel's sound political and financial views, and consulted him henceforth on all important questions of state. But his many trials, sufferings and wanderings had sapped the strength of this distinguished man, even before he had reached his seventieth year. The hounded victims of Spanish fanaticism would have needed bodies of iron and the strength of flint to keep them from succumbing to the afflictions that crowded upon them.

But the very magnitude of the distress that had come upon them, instead of crushing the spirit of the Sephardic Jews raised it to a height bordering on pride. The thought or the feeling that whom the Lord loveth he chastiseth, and that he upon whom the hand of God had fallen most heavily and who had endured untold woes must be one of God's chosen few, took possession of the consciousness of the survivors more or less clearly. They regarded their expulsion from the Pyrenean Peninsula as a third exile, and themselves as especially favored of God whom he had chastised all the more severely because of the greater love he bore for them. Contrary to expectation, a feeling of exultation took possession of them that transfigured though it could not make them forget the sufferings they endured. As soon as the burden of their thousandfold misery became somewhat lighter and they were able to breathe somewhat freely, they stood erect, and carried their heads high like princes. They had lost everything, but not their aristocratic bearing and their pride. As a matter of fact, the Spanish Jews were far superior to their brethren of all other countries in culture, learning and intrinsic worth, and this superiority showed itself in their external appearance and in their language. Their love for their native home was so great that it left no room in their hearts for hatred against their unnatural mother, who had inflicted so many woes upon them. Wherever they settled they founded Spanish or Portuguese colonies. They brought with them the Spanish tongue and Spanish dignity and aristocratic bearing to Africa, to European Turkey, to Syria, Palestine, Italy, Flanders and everywhere else, and cherished them with so much love that they have been preserved by their desscendants to this very day. They could therefore come in contact with Christians as their peers, as manly men, without timidity and cringing. In this respect they formed a striking contrast to the German Jews, who despised refinement of language and who regarded carelessness of speech and seclusion from the Christian world as indications of religiousness. The Sephardic Jews generally laid stress upon beauty of form, taste in dressing, upon decorum in the synagogs, as well as upon the means for the exchange of thought. The Spanish or Portuguese rabbis preached in the vernacular and attached great importance to euphony. This superiority of the Jews of Sephardic descent and culture was acknowledged and admired by the other Jews also. For this reason the Sephardic Jews became the leaders in all the communities even where they constituted only a minority. In the century after their expulsion, they are almost exclusively the standard-bearers of

Judaism, and Jewish history rings with the names of their rabbis, writers, thinkers and dreamers. Only the communities of Germany and Poland did not come under the Sephardic influence because the Spanish exiles never reached those countries or only in isolated cases.

The Berber countries along the North African coast and the habitable interior contained a large number of Sephardic Jews, who had gathered there in the course of the century that began with the great persecutions of 1391 and terminated with their complete expulsion. Though treated, for the most part, with arbitrariness by the petty Berber tyrants and the uncivilized and degenerated Moorish population, and often compelled to wear a degrading garb, energetic Jews found many opportunities to distinguish themselves and to rise to positions of eminence and influence. In Morocco, a wealthy Jew who was also a historian stood high in the favor of the prince of that state, to whom he had rendered important services. Fez contained a community of five thousand Jewish families that controlled all the industries, and a Sephardic Jew of that city, Samuel Alvalensi, who enjoyed the favor of the king because of his ability and courage, and was so respected by the population that they acknowledged him as their representative. In the important capital, Tlemsen (Tremcen), Sephardic Jews constituted the majority of the large Jewish community. Here the eighteen-year-old Jacob Berab (1474-1541) found refuge after his flight from Spain—the youth who became one of the most alert among the Spanish exiles and the most ingenious rabbi of his time next to his German contemporary, Jacob Polak, but who was at the same time obstinate and contentious and gained many opponents though he did not lack in admirers.

In Algiers, the head of the Jewish community that was already in its decline, was a descendant of Spanish fugitives of 1391—Simon Duran II, a son of the rabbi and philosopher Solomon Duran. Like his brother, Zemah Duran, he was regarded as an eminent rabbinical authority. Noble-minded like his father, Simon Duran proved himself a tower of strength for the Spanish exiles whom fate had led in his vicinity. Through his efforts, the small community raised seven hundred ducats for the redemption of fifty fugitives who had been shipwrecked on the shore of Seville, imprisoned there for two years, and finally sold as slaves in Algiers. Simon Duran did not spare his means, nor did he hesitate to risk his life where the promotion of the religiousness, morality and safety of his brethren was concerned.

The aged historian and astronomer, Abraham Zacuto, and a younger man, Moses Alashkar, two Sephardic men of prominence, found refuge in Tunis for several years. Zacuto who, in the Pyrenean Peninsula, was at the head of a school where he taught mathematics and astronomy to Christian and Mohammedan students and whose works, printed in Lisbon, were widely read and used, was compelled to roam about like an outcast and but narrowly escaped death. It appears that he spent several quiet years in Tunis, where he completed his chronicle (Yohasin, 1504)—a work which is more celebrated than useful. It can by no means be styled a historic work; its only merit is that it stimulated the study of history among the Jews. Moses ben Isaac Alashkar, who lived in Tunis contemporaneously with Zacuto, was an ingenius Talmudist like his teacher, Samuel Alvalensi; a clear thinker, free from narrow one-sidedness, and, though a believer in the cabala, he defended Maimonides and his philosophic system against the attacks of the obscurantists. The terror with which the Spanish armies inspired the Jews of Northern Africa, it seems, led Zacuto, Alashkar and many others to leave Tunis. The former emigrated to Turkey, where, it appears, he died soon after (before 1515). Alashkar fled to Egypt, and acquired a position of influence by virtue of his versatility and wealth.

In Egypt, and particularly in the capital, Cairo, there was likewise a large influx of Spanish fugitives, and ere long they gained the ascendancy over the native Jews. At that time, all the Egyptian communities were still governed, as in former times, by a Jewish chief judge or prince (Nagid, Reis) in the person of Isaac Cohen Shalal, whose dignity was recognized by the Egyptian sultan and who employed his wealth for the welfare of the community and the fugitives who had found refuge in Egypt. He received the Spanish exiles with open arms, and appointed some of them to important communal offices. As a result, they acquired considerable influence little by little. Among those who had come to Cairo was David ibn Abi-Zimra (about 1470-1573), a disciple of the mystic Joseph Saragossi, rich in knowledge, virtues and treasures, and the head of a large family, who soon eclipsed the native scholars and was acknowledged as the highest rabbinical authority.

A political change that occurred in Egypt placed the Spaniards at the head of the Egyptian Jewry. The Land of the Nile, with Syria and Palestine that formed part of that kingdom which the sultans of Constantinople had long vainly striven to conquer, finally after the decisive battle of Aleppo (1517), fell into the hands of Selim I, who converted it into a Turkish province to be administered by a pasha as viceroy. Selim farmed out the new Turkish coinage of Egypt to Abraham de Castro, a Sephardic Jew, who carried great weight in Turkish official circles and in Egyptian Jewry by virtue of his wealth and his influence. De Castro was a very charitable man, spent annually three thousand gulden in alms-giving, and took an active interest in the affairs of his coreligionists.

It seems that Selim or the vice-sultan changed the ancient constitution of Egyptian Jewry. The office of the Nagid, with all the dignities and powers attached to it, was abolished, and each community was made independent, with the right to elect its own rabbis and to govern its own affairs. The last Jewish-Egyptian prince or chief-rabbi, Isaac Shalal, was deposed, and he removed with his treasures to Jerusalem where he became the benefactor of the community. The rabbinate of Cairo was thereupon conferred upon the Spanish immigrant David ibn Abi-Zimra, who was famous for his learning, generosity and wealth. His authority was so great that he ventured to abolish an ancient custom that had outgrown its usefulness but had been retained from century to century simply because it was an ancient custom. For over eighteen centuries the Babylonian Jews had adopted the Syrian or Seleucidan Era commemorative of the victory won by the Syrian king Seleucus over the other generals of Alexander the Great. The Syrian kingdom and the Seleucidae had disappeared long ago; Syria became successively the spoil of the Romans, the Byzantines, the Mohammedans, the Mongols, and the Turks; but the Babylonian Jews and the Egyptian Jews who received it from them persisted, nevertheless, in preserving the ancient era and in using it in the dating of bills of divorce and similar documents. While the Palestinian and the European Jews had successively adopted a different era, counting from the destruction of the Temple or from the creation of the world, the Babylonian and Egyptian Jews clung to the Seleucidan era so firmly that every bill of divorce that was not dated according to that era was regarded as invalid. This antiquated era Ibn Abi-Zimra abolished in Egypt, and substituted for it that of the creation which had already found general acceptance. His innovation met with no opposition.

During his rabbinate the community of Cairo was exposed to grave danger. The fourth viceroy of Egypt, Ahmed Shaitan (Satan), formed the design of wresting Egypt from Turkey with himself as its independent ruler. Successful in his preliminary steps, he demanded of Abraham de Castro that he place his own name on the coins. De Castro seemingly agreed, and asked that Ahmed issue an order in writing to that effect. Provided with this document, he left Egypt secretly and hastened to Constantinople to the court of Suleiman II, in order to convince the sultan of the pasha's treacherous designs. In his anger at the frustration of his scheme, Ahmed determined to avenge himself on the Jews, cast several Jews, probably de Castro's relatives and friends, into prison, and permitted the mamelukes to plunder the Jewish quarters of Cairo. Thereupon he summoned twelve representative Jews to his palace, and demanded that they furnish him with an exorbitant sum of money within a short time on pain of the death of their wives and children. The twelve representatives were retained as hostages. As the Jews could hardly collect a tenth of the money demanded of them, Ahmed's private secretary ordered the collectors also thrown in chains, and threatened to exterminate the entire community on that very day as soon as his master left his bath. But in the very moment when the katib uttered this threat, the pasha was attacked in his bath by one of his viziers, Mohammed Bey, and several other conspirators, and severely wounded. Ahmed Shaitan fled from his castle, but was betrayed, seized, chained and beheaded. Mohammed Bey set the imprisoned Jewish representatives at liberty, and freed the entire community of Cairo from the danger of death. The day of this deliverance (Adar 28, 1524) was for a long time celebrated by the Egyptian Jews as a memorable day (Purim Cairo).

The influx of Spanish and Portuguese exiles added largely to the Jewish population and to the importance of Jerusalem and other Palestinian cities; and here, too, the strangers soon became the communal leaders. In the brief period of seven years the Jewish population of the Holy City increased from less than seventy to two hundred families, and within two decades (1495-1521) to fifteen hundred. The economic condition of the Jewish inhabitants of Jerusalem was immeasureably improved by the accession of new residents. While hitherto almost every Jewish resident of Jerusalem lived in destitution, thirty years later there were only two hundred who depended upon charity. Of still greater importance is the fact that the moral condition of the community was greatly improved through the influence of the newcomers. Jerusalem was no longer the robbers' den which Obadiah da Bertinoro found upon his arrival thither from Italy. The community was no longer oppressed and driven to despair or to emigration by greedy, brutal and treacherous elders or communal officials; harmony, peace, justice and security reigned in the Holy City. There still prevailed, it is true, an exaggerated external piety in the community, but that piety stood no longer in glaring contrast with a revolting, immoral life. This moral regeneration of Jerusalem was due largely to the influence of the gentle and amiable Italian preacher, Obadiah da Bertinoro, who for more than twenty years, by precept and example, taught the growing community inward religiousness and nobility of character, and weaned it away from barbaric coarseness. An Italian pilgrim to Jerusalem says of Bertinoro: "Were I to sing his praises, I could never be done. He is the most respected man in the land: everything is done at his command, and none dares gainsay him. When he preaches, everyone hangs on his lips, and not the slightest noise is heard." The Sephardic exiles supported Bertinoro in his noble work.

As a protest against former abuses, the community of Jerusalem, probably through the efforts of Obadiah da Bertinoro and his associates, adopted as inviolable several admirable ordinances, which were engraved on a tablet in the synagog as a memorial. Mohammedan tribunals were not to be called upon to settle differences between Jews except in extreme cases. Jewish judges were not to force wealthy members of the community to advance money for communal purposes. Talmudic scholars and widows were to be exempt from all communal contributions. Jews were not to buy counterfeit coins, and, if acquired accidentally, were not to pass them on. No wine was to be drunk at the grave of the prophet Samuel. It had become a custom for men and women, the latter unveiled, to make a pilgrimage to Ramah, and to indulge in wine on that occasion—an indulgence which often led to excesses. The arrival in Jerusalem of Isaac Shalal from Egypt with his wealth, his experience and the respect he enjoyed added still greater importance to the Holy City.

Next to Jerusalem, the comparatively youngest city of Palestine, Safed in Galilee, rose in importance and influence, and gradually eclipsed the mother city. At the end of the fifteenth and at the beginning of the sixteenth century, it is true, Safed contained only about three hundred Jewish families—natives (Moriscos), Berber and Sephardim—

and had at first no great Talmudic scholar destined to become a leader. Safed's importance and influence date from the time of the arrival of a Spanish exile, Joseph Saragossi (from Saragossa) who was to Safed what Obadiah da Bertinoro was to Jerusalem. Joseph Saragossi was likewise a gentle, amiable personality, and regarded it as his life's mission to preach concord and to restore peace in families and in the community both among the Jews and Mohammedans. For this reason he was beloved by the Mohammedans, who revered him as an angel of peace. When he once desired to leave Safed, the community begged him to remain, and allowed him an annual salary two-thirds of which was contributed by the Mohammedan governor of the city. Joseph Saragossi transplanted to Safed the study of the Talmud as well as the cabala, and through him Safed became a cabalistic nest.

Damascus, the capital of Syria, also received a large influx of Sephardic exiles, and a Sephardic community of about five hundred families was soon formed alongside of the original Mostarabic community. Shortly after their arrival, the Spaniards erected a magnificent synagog in Damascus, called Khathaib. Their number increased so greatly that they soon separated themselves into several communities or groups, according to the countries or districts of their former homes.

But the majority of the Sephardic exiles found refuge in European Turkey. The sultan Bayazet II, Selim I and Suleiman I successively received the exiles with open arms, and granted them the same freedom which the Armenians and Greeks enjoyed. A Jewish poet, Samuel Usque, describes enthusiastically the happy condition of his coreligionists in Turkey. At first the condition of the Jews in Turkey was indeed an unusually happy one, because they proved of great service to the relatively young state. The Turks were good warriors but poor citizens. The sultans, in their frequently strained relations with the Christian countries, had little confidence in the Greeks, Armenians or Christians of other denominations whom they regarded as spies and traitors, whereas they could count on the loyalty, reliability and usefulness of the Jews. The latter, therefore, constituted the merchant class of Turkey on the one hand, and the middle class on the other. Not only the wholesale and retail trade on land and on sea, but also the arts and crafts were in their hands. The Maranos who had fled from Spain and Portugal provided the warlike Turks with new military equipments, firearms, large cannon, manufactured powder for them and taught them how to handle it. In this way intolerant Christendom itself supplied its arch-enemy, the Turks, with the weapons that enabled the latter to inflict upon the former defeat upon defeat and humiliation upon humiliation. Jewish physicians, skilled students of the school of Salamanca, were particularly popular in Turkey, and because of their versatility, superior education, discretion and shrewdness, were given preference over the Christian and even Mohammedan physicians. These Jewish physicians, mostly of Spanish descent, attained a great influence in the courts of the sultans, viziers and pashas.

Sultan Selim had as his personal physician a Spanish exile, Joseph Hamon, whose son and grandson successively occupied similar positions. His son, Moses Hamon (b. about 1490—d. before 1565), physician of the wise sultan Suleiman, enjoyed even greater respect and influence than his father because of his professional skill and manly character, and used to accompany the sultan on his military expeditions. Moses Hamon brought with him from Persia, whither he had accompanied

Suleiman on a victorious expedition, a learned man by the name of Jacob Tus (or Taws—about 1535), who had translated the Pentateuch into Persian. This Persian, together with a Chaldaic-Arabic translation, Moses Hamon had afterward printed at his own expense. Moses was regarded as a protector of his coreligionists, and as a patron of Jewish learning.

Constantinople, the capital, had a very populous Jewish community, whose numbers were swelled daily by the arrival of new Sephardic refugees; it was the largest community in Europe, and numbered about thirty thousand souls. Constantinople contained twenty-four synagogs and as many communal groups. The Jews of Turkey did not form a solid unit, but were divided into groups in accordance with the country or the place whence they came, each group preserving its original characteristics, its reminiscences, its liturgy and its customs, with a separate synagog and even a separate rabbinate. Each group apportioned among its own members, independently of the other groups, not only the taxes for the support of its synagog, congregational officials, its poor, its hospitals and schools, but also the government taxes.

In the early days, the native Jews who formed the majority predominated. The chief-rabbi, Moses Kapsali, was upon his death succeeded by Elijah Misrahi, probably a descendant of a Greek family, who, like his predecessors, occupied a seat in the divan under the sultan Bayazet, Selim I, and possibly also under Suleiman, and was the official religious representative of Turkish Jewry. Elijah Misrahi (b. about 1455—d. between 1525-27), a disciple of the German school, was a profound Talmudic scholar and a man of rigid piety, but was at the same time a student of the sciences, lectured on mathematics and astronomy, and wrote books on these subjects which were so popular that they were translated into Latin. In his youth he was a hotspur, and entered into combat with the Karaites of Turkey. In his old age, on the other hand, he assumed a friendly attitude toward them, and frustrated the efforts of a few zealots, particularly among the Apulian congregation of Constantinople, who sought, by means of excommunication, to interdict all intercourse between Rabbinites and Karaites.

At this time the Turkish Jews had also a sort of political representative (Kahiya) who had access to the sultan and the high dignitaries, and who was appointed by the court. Under Suleiman this office was occupied by a certain Shaltiel who is spoken of as a man of noble character. It was the function of the Kahiyah to intercede with the court in behalf of his coreligionists whenever they were subjected to injustice or violence; and such occasions were not infrequent when one considers the contempt which the Turkish population entertained for all unbelievers, Jews as well as Christians, the despotic rule of the provincial pashas, and the fanaticism of the Christian Greeks and Bulgars.

The second largest community of the Turkish empire was Salonica, an unhealthy city that nevertheless attracted the Sephardic exiles. Salonica soon contained at least ten communities, the majority of which were of Sephardic origin. Later on the number of communal groups increased to thirty-six. Salonica became a veritable Jewish city, containing more Jews than non-Jews. Here, too, the Sephardic immigrants gained supremacy within a short time, so that the Spanish language became dominant in Salonica. Distinguished among the Sephardim was Judah Benveniste, the son of Abraham Benveniste, the last Spanish-Jewish finance minister, who had saved enough out of his father's wealth to enable him to possess an exceedingly valuable library. Representative of the Talmud in that city were the learned family of Taytasak and Jacob ibn Habib, though they were not scholars of the first magnitude. Philosophy and astronomy were also cultivated to some extent among the Sephardim who settled in Salonica. The cabala, however, received here the greatest attention, and likewise among the Sephardim, such as Joseph Taytasak, Samuel Franco and others. Salonica in European Turkey, and Safed in Palestine, gradually became the centers of cabalistic vagaries.

In Asia Minor, too, the Sephardic fugitives settled in the cities of Amasia, Brussa, Tria and Tokat. In Greece, likewise, several populous communities sprang up. In Patras, Negroponte and Thebes there were likewise important communities. The Thebans were regarded as very learned; that is, as Talmudists. In Canea, on the island of Candia (Crete) that belonged to Venice, there was also a considerable community, at the head of which stood two famous families—the Delmedigos, sons and relatives of the philosopher Delmedigo, and the Kapsalis, relatives of the whilom chief-rabbi of Turkey. One member of the latter family, Elijah Kapsali (about 1490-1555), was a creditable historian. When a pestilence once devastated Candia and plunged the survivors into sorrow, he composed (1523) a history of the Turkish dynasty, written in a graceful Hebrew style, and in clear and elevated diction free from all literary conceits and exaggerations. Kapsali endeavored to narrate only the truth. Incidentally, Kapsali interwove episodes of Jewish history in his narration, and he describes in sombre colors the tragic experiences of the Spanish exiles as told to him by the fugitives themselves.

Though Kapsali's aim in the composition of his history was merely to provide some diversion for the dejected survivors of the pestilence, his work may, and did, serve as a model of fine Hebrew historic style and found imitation.

Italy, too, was then teeming with fugitive Jews. Nearly the majority of those who were expelled from Spain, Portugal or Germany touched Italy first, either to settle there under the protection of some tolerant ruler, or to pass on to Greece, Turkey or Palestine. Strange to say, the then papacy proved itself more tolerant than any other Italian prince or state. Alexander VI, Julius II, Leo X and Clement VII were too much absorbed in other interests to persecute the Jews. These popes and their sacred colleges observed the canonical laws only in so far as they could utilize them for their self-aggrandizement. In total disregard of the decree of the Council of Basle, that prohibited Christians to consult Jewish physicians, these popes and their cardinals employed Jewish physicians by preference. It seems that in the midst of the secret plots, intrigues and poisonings that prevailed in the curia since the days of Alexander VI, Jewish physicians were preferred because there was no danger that they might hand a pope or cardinal a poisoned pill instead of medicaments. Alexander VI had as his private physician a Provençal Jew, Bonet de Lates, who was also an astronomer, and made an astronomic ring the Latin description of which he dedicated to the pope in terms of fulsome flattery. Bonet de Lates became afterward also the private physician and friend and adviser of Pope Leo X; also Julius II had a Jewish physician in the person of Simon Zarfati. Jewish physicians were generally sought after in Italy at that time. Among the scholars mentioned in the biographies of this period were: Abraham de Balmes

(d. 1521) of Lecce, physician of the cardinal Domenici Grimani, who also possessed a knowledge of philosophy, and who wrote a treatise on Hebrew grammar (Mikneh Abraham) which was published with a Latin translation by Daniel Bomborg (1523); Judah or Laudadeus de Blanis of Perugia; Obadiah or Servadus de Sforno (Sfurno; b. ab. 1470, d. 1550), physician in Rome and Bologne, who occupied himself also with biblical and philosophical studies and who dedicated several of his Hebrew works with a Latin translatin to King Henry II of France. Towering above them stood Jacob Mantin (about 1490-1549), who fled from Tortosa to Italy, and who achieved fame as a physician and philosopher. Jacob Mantin was also a linguist, understood Latin, Italian and Arabic, in addition to Spanish and Hebrew, and translated works on medicine and metaphysics from the Hebrew or Arabic into Latin. He was physician-in-ordinary to Pope Paul III, whose respect he enjoyed; of the ambassador of Emperor Charles V in Venice, and of the Prince Hercole Gonzaga. A philosophic work which he translated from Arabic he dedicated to the doge of Venice, Andreas Griti. His fame as a scholar, however, was dimmed by his evil character and evil deeds.

Abraham Farissol (b. 1451—d. about 1525) of Avignon, who for some unknown reason settled in Ferrara, was the first Jewish scholar to occupy himself with the study of geography to which he was impelled by the wonderful discoveries of the southern coast of Africa and of India by the Portuguese, and of America by the Spaniards. Farissol had access to the court of Ercole d'Este I, duke of Ferrara, one of the best Italian princes, who vied with the Medici in the furtherance of science. The duke found pleasure in his conversations, and invited him often to discuss religious questions with learned monks.

Through the influence of Jewish physicians and educated Jews in general, Jewish fugitives from the Pyrenean Peninsula and from Germany and even Maranos who had openly returned to Judaism, were admitted in many cities of Northern Italy. After the destruction of the Neapolitan community, the most important Italian communities were formed, through the influx of foreign Jews, in Venice and Padua, and in Rome and Ancona. In the Venetian Republic two conflicting views prevailed with reference to the Jews. One faction preferred to exploit the commercial ability of the Jews, and did not wish to provoke them for fear that their Turkish coreligionists (the Levantine Jews) might retaliate commercially. The other faction, again, feared the competition of Jewish merchants. The treatment of the Jews in the Republic of Venice depended therefore upon the preponderance of the one or the other faction. Venice was the first Italian city that established a special Jewish quarter (Ghetto) for her Jewish inhabitants (March, 1516).

The immigrated Jews, Spanish or German, generally gained preponderance over the native Jews. The family of Abrabanel in particular played a very important part in Italy. The head of the family, Isaac Abrabanel, bent beneath his sorrows and years, died (1509), it is true, while the affairs of the Italian Jews were still in an unsettled condition. His oldest son, Leon Medigo, too, who was too much of a philosophic dreamer and idealist, exerted but little influence upon Italian Jewry. But Samuel Abrabanel, the youngest of the three brothers (b. 1473—d. about 1550), left a deep impression upon his generation. He was regarded in his day as the most eminent Jew of Italy, and was honored by his coreligionists like a prince. He was the only one among his brothers who inherited his father's financial genius, and he seems, upon his return from the Talmudic academy of Salonica, to have entered the service of the viceroy of Naples, Don Pedro de Toledo, in the ministry of the finance. In Naples he accumulated a considerable fortune, estimated at upward of two hundred thousand sequins ($250,000), which, true to the traditions of his family, he applied to benevolent purposes. His wife, Benvenida Abrabanel, complemented his lofty virtues, and is spoken of by her contemporaries almost with religious veneration. She was at once tender-hearted, deeply religious, clever, and courageous, and a model of culture and refinement. Don Pedro, the mighty Spanish viceroy of Naples, placed his second daughter Leonora in Benvenida's charge as companion; and when Leonora afterward became Duchess of Tuscany, she still cherished a deep affection for the Jewish donna and called her mother. This noble couple, Samuel and Benvenida, who combined tenderness and worldly wisdom, ardent loyalty to Judaism and social intercourse with non-Jews, were at once the pride and the mainstay of the Italian Jews and of all those who came under their beneficent influence. Their home became the center of Jewish learning in Southern Italy. Christian scholars also frequented Abrabanel's circle.

In Italy the Jews then possessed the freedom and the capacity to exchange a word with a Christian. But crossing the Alps into Germany, one found himself at once in a raw atmosphere, both natural and political. The German population was then no less hostile to the Jews than the Spanish, and begrudged them even their wretched life in the narrow quarters where they were penned in. From several districts of Germany they had already been expelled, from Cologne, Mayence and Augsburg; in all Suabia there was not one Jew. From other districts they were expelled about the same time when their brethren were banished from the Pyrenean Peninsula. Emperor Frederick III, it is true, protected them to his last hour. He, too, had a Jewish physician, certainly a rarity in Germany, in the person of the learned Jacob ben Yehiel Loans whom he showed much favor and whom he knighted. It is reported that upon his deathbed Frederick urged upon his son to protect the Jews, and to pay no heed to the calumnious charges against them. It seems that Jacob Loans enjoyed the favor of the Emperor Maximilian also, for this emperor appointed his kinsman, Joselin Loans of Rosheim (1480-1555), as the representative, defender and protector of the Jews, and inducted him into his office by a special oath.

The very circumstances that the German Jews needed a defender shows the insecurity of their position. The emperor Maximilian did not possess a firm character, was rather susceptible to all sorts of influences and innuendos, and did not always follow his father's advice. His attitude toward the Jews was an irresolute one; protecting or promising to protect them at one time, he countenanced their expulsion or humiliation at another time. Now and then the emperor lent a willing ear to the malicious slanders of desecration of hosts and child-murder which the Dominicans purposely circulated, particularly during his reign, and which found still greater credence since the alleged martyrdom of the youthful Simon of Trent. During his reign, therefore, the Jews of Germany and of adjacent countries were subjected not only to expulsions but also to persecutions and to martyrdom. Martyrdom was of such frequent occurrence that a special confession of sin (widui) was formulated for those who were called upon to seal their faith with their life. When Jews were banished from a city with the consent, or through the passive attitude of the emperor, the latter did not scruple to confiscate the realty they left behind and to convert it into money. The community of Nuremberg was expelled (March 10, 1499) with the emperor's consent. The realty of the Jews was confiscated by the emperor and sold to the city of Nuremberg for eight thousand gulden. Other German cities—Ulm, Nordlingen, Colmar and Magdeburg—also expelled their Jews about this time.

The community of Ratisbon, the oldest in Germany, fared still worse. Ever since the burghers of that imperial city were humiliated and fined by the emperor Frederick because of their connection with the blood-accusation against the Jews, the amicable relations between the Jews and the Christians that prevailed hitherto gave way to bitterness and hatred. Instead of blaming their own folly, the burghers held the Jews responsible for the deterioration of their city; and the priests, embittered by the failure of their designs upon the Jews, agitated the expulsion of the Jews. As a consequence, the millers refused to sell the Jews flour, and the bakers bread (1499); and the clergy threatened the artisans with exclusion from the communion if they supplied the Jews with food. On some market-days the Jews were not allowed to buy any foodstuffs at all; on other days they were permitted to make their purchases only at a certain hour, and only after the Christians had made their necessary purchases. Under severe penalties, imposed by the council, Christians were interdicted to make purchases for the Jews, and were urged to treat the Jews heartlessly, "for the glory of God and their own salvation"! The magistracy occupied itself seriously with the proposition of asking the consent of Emperor Maximilian for the expulsion of the Jews from Ratisbon with the exception, possibly, of twenty-four families. However, the Jews were permitted to lead their wretched existence in Ratisbon only a few years longer. Outside of Ratisbon there were only two important communities in Germany—in Frankfort-on-the-Main and in Worms—and these, too, were frequently threatened with expulsion.

Prague contained a large number of Jews; that city, however, did not belong to Germany proper, but was a separate domain, ruled over by Ladislaus, king of Hungary. Under this king the Bohemian Jews did not fare better than their brethren in Germany; the Jewish quarter of Prague was frequently plundered by mobs. The burghers were only too willing to expel the Jews; but the nobles protected them. When the question of expelling the Jews came up in a diet, it was decided that the Jews were to be tolerated in the domain of Bohemia for all time to come. If a Jew violated a law, only the guilty person was to be punished, and his crime was not to be imputed to the entire community. King Ladislaus approved this decree of the diet, only to violate it, for the burghers of Prague exerted themselves to the utmost to annul it. They finally succeeded in arousing the enmity of the king against the Jews, to such an extent that he gave his consent to the expulsion of the Jews, and threatened those Christians with banishment who would venture to intercede in their behalf. But through some unknown circumstances they remained in Bohemia. Expecting expulsion daily, they accustomed themselves nevertheless to live on the edge of a flaming crater. Gerson Kohen, a descendant of the Soncino family, the Italian print-

Part of the Old Jewish Cemetery at Prague

ers, established a Hebrew press in Prague (about 1503), the first in Germany, nearly four decades after Hebrew presses had been established in Italy.

The community of Prague, it seems, did not contain many learned men at that time, for Gerson's press did not print even a single Talmudic-rabbinic work, but supplied only the needs of the synagog, while the Italian and Turkish presses published important books, the works of older and contemporary authors. Only a single rabbinic authority, Jacob Polak, is mentioned in Prague in this period, and he was a native of Poland (b. ab. 1460—d. 1535). Next to Jacob Berab in the Orient, Jacob Polak was the most profound and ingenious Talmudist of this generation. He was the originator of that marvelous system of Talmudic subtlety, the pilpul, that was later on to receive its highest development in Poland.

Next to Turkey and Italy, Poland was at this time a place of refuge for the hounded and banished Jews, particularly for those of Germany. In Poland, which under the Jagellons was united with Lithuania, the condition of the Jews was more favorable than in the neighboring countries west of the Vistula and the Carpathians, although the monk Capistrano had interrupted for a time the friendly relations prevailing between the rulers and the Jews. The kings and the nobles conferred privileges upon the Jews when other interests were not at stake, because the latter were indispensable to them to a certain extent. The Jews bought the produce of the soil from the great and petty nobles, exported it to foreign countries, and thus supplied the ready money that is so indispensable in a moneyless country. The farming of taxes and the distilleries were largely in the hands of the Jews. They were permitted to own land, and were not only merchants but also artisans. There were in

Poland thirty-two hundred Jewish to five hundred Christian wholesale merchants, but three times as many Jewish artisans, including gold and silversmiths, blacksmiths and weavers. The statute of Casimir IV, so favorable to the Jews, was still in force. The Jews were generally regarded as citizens, were not required to wear any degrading badges, and were allowed to carry arms. After the death of Casimir IV, it is true, two enemies rose against them: the clergy, who regarded the favorable situation of the Jews of Poland as an insult to Christianity, and the German merchants and artisans, long settled in the cities, who had brought the guild system with them from Germany and who hated the Jewish merchants and artisans as competitors; and both together succeeded at times in inducing Casimir's sons, John Albert, king of Poland, and Alexander, grand duke of Lithuania, to revoke the privileges enjoyed by the Jews, to confine them to special quarters, and even to expel them from certain cities now and then (1496-1505). Alexander expelled all the Jews from Lithuania (1495), including the Karaites, though he permitted them to return (1501), when upon the death of his brother John Albert, he ascended the throne of Poland.* But his immediate successor, Sigismund I (1506-1548), treated the Jews favorably, and guarded them against persecutions and exclusions. The most effective protection, however, the Polish Jews received from the Polish nobility, who hated the German cities out of national antipathy, and therefore availed themselves of the Jews both for their own profit and as tools against the presumption of the Germans. Inasmuch as the nobles were the palatines, voivodes and higher officials, the restrictive

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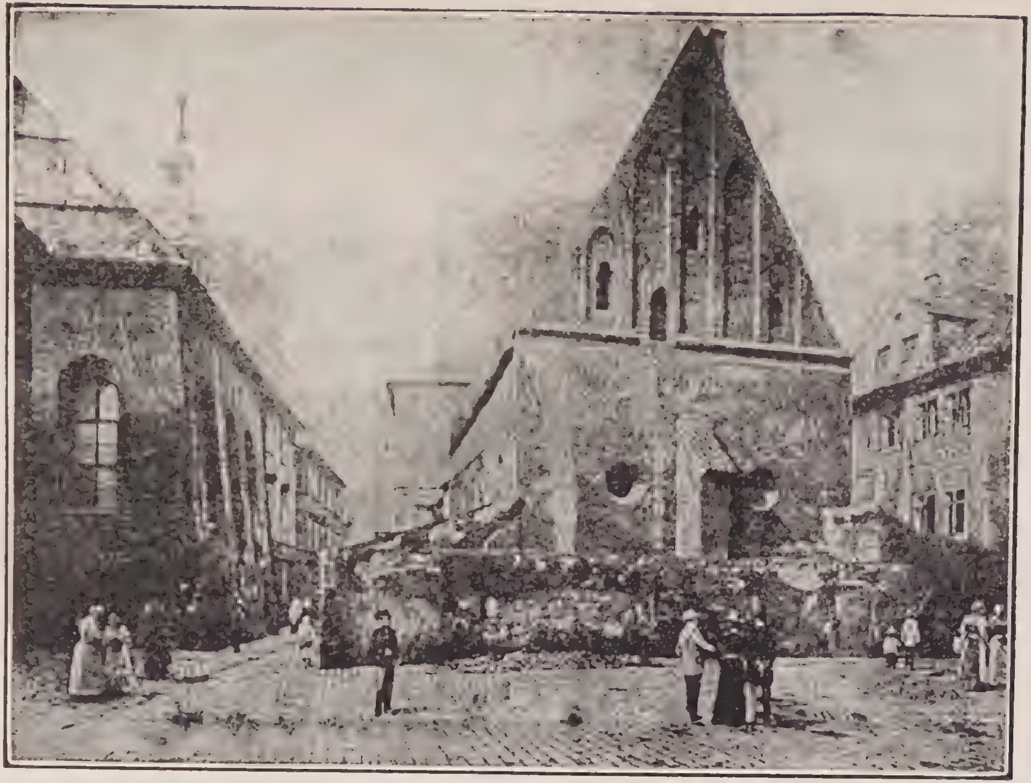
* See Rabinowitz's Hebrew translation, Vol. 7, pp. 57-59.



The Altneuschul, Prague

anti-Jewish laws remained a dead letter to the chagrin of the clergy and the German guilds. Poland therefore became a favorite place of refuge for the Jews who were persecuted elsewhere. A converted Jew who wished to return to Judaism, or a Christian who wished to accept Judaism could do so with impunity in Poland as he could in Turkey.

The rabbis were important agents for the crown; it was their function to collect the poll-taxes of the community and to deliver them to the royal treasury. For this reason, the rabbis of the large cities were either chosen or confirmed by the king, were regarded as the heads of the community in the administration of communal affairs, represented it at court, and bore the title of arch-rabbis. They retained the civil jurisdiction enjoyed hitherto and were given criminal jurisdiction also now and then to banish or punish with death unworthy members of the community. But in the beginning of the sixteenth century there were as yet no great Talmudists in the land that was destined to become the chief seat of the Talmud for several centuries. The study of the Talmud was first transplanted into Poland by the German Talmudists who immigrated there. Entire multitudes of Jewish families from the regions of the Rhine and the Main, from Bavaria, Suabia, Bohemia and Austria, settled on the shores of the Vistula and the Dnieper, and they brought with them, after they had lost all their property, their most precious possession, which they defended with their lives and of which none could rob them: their religious convictions, the customs of their fathers, and the knowledge of the Talmud. The rabbinic school of Germany, stunted at home for lack of air, struck deep root in Poland, Lithuania, Ruthenia and Volhynia, spread in every direction, became impregnated with Slavic elements, and was transformed into an original, a Polish school.

But the German-Jewish fugitives transplanted into Poland not alone the knowledge of the Talmud, but also the German language. The new language was gradually adopted by the native Jews also, and displaced the Polish or Ruthenian, which they had spoken hitherto. Just as the Spanish Jews transformed a portion of European or Asiatic Turkey into a new Spain, so the German Jews transformed Poland, Lithuania, and their dependencies into a new Germany, as it were. For several successive centuries the Jews were thus divided into two classes: those who spoke Spanish and those who spoke German. The Italian Jews, comparatively few in number, disappeared as a separate class, since in Italy, too, the Jews had to understand either Spanish or German. The German Jews who settled in Poland gradually discarded the German characteristics which they had brought with them, but not the language. They honored it as a palladium, as a sacred reminiscence, and though they employed the vernacular in their intercourse with the Poles, they retained the German in the intimacy of the family circle, in the school, and in the synagog. It was regarded, next to the Hebrew, as a sacred tongue. It was exceedingly fortunate for the Jews that at a time when new misfortunes were hovering over their heads they found a country on the border that received them hospitably and granted them protection.

* In the Muscovite kingdom, it seems, there were no Jews in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Toward the end of the fifteenth century, however, an incident occurred that gave rise directly or remotely to many laws concerning the Jews in this

kingdom. In the fifteenth century the Jews were already firmly established in Lithuania (with its appanages, Volhynia and Little Russia), and many Jews frequently crossed the border into the Muscovite kingdom for commercial purposes. In 1470, during the reign of the Muscovite czar Ivan Vassilievich III, a Jew named Zachariah came from Kief to Novgorod in the retinue of Prince Michael Olegovich, and made the acquaintance of two Greek-Catholic priests, Dionysius and Alexis. As a result of this association, the two priests and their families accepted Judaism, and induced several other priests and nobles (boyars) to follow their example. When the czar visited Novgorod in 1480 and met Dionysius and Alexis, he was so impressed with their learning and eloquence that he took them with him to Moscow, and appointed them as preachers of the two greatest churches of the capital. In Moscow the two priests continued to proselytize, and won over the archimandrite Zosimo, the princess Helena and other nobles. This activity finally aroused the anger of the Greek-Catholic clergy. Through the efforts of Archbishop Gennadii, the council of Moscow (1490) sent the two priests back to Novgorod, where they were publicly burned. Their ideas, however, did not die with them, and fifty years later, under the influence of the Lutheran reformation, the Judaising heresy was revived even in the Muscovite kingdom by Bakshin and Theodore Kasai. In the course of time non-conformist sects multiplied in the provinces of interior Russia, and the Subotniki and Molokane are in existence to this day in the governments of Woronezh, Samara, Saratov and in Georgia in the Caucasus; but it has not been definitely ascertained whether the present-day sectarians are the descendants of those of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The earliest official government reference to them is in 1774. As a result of the incident stated above, the Muscovite czars, and the Romanoffs after them, prohibited Jews to set foot on Muscovite soil, as is evidenced by the attitude toward the Jews of Ivan IV (the Terrible), Catherine I and Elizabeth, the daughter of Peter the Great.

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* This and the following paragraph are condensed from Rabinowitz's Hebrew translation, Vol. 7, pp. 60-63. Tr.

Another isolated incident that occurred in the reign of Ivan III possibly enhanced the dislike entertained against the Jews. This czar married one of the daughters of the last Byzantine king who lived in Italy after the fall of Constantinople, and when the czarina came to Russia she was accompanied by many Greeks and Italians who were to serve as teachers and physicians. Among these Italians was a Venitian Jew, Moses Leon, who became a court physician. Once when the czar's son fell sick and the czar inquired of the Jewish physician after the condition of his son, the Jew replied: "I will cure thy son or forfeit my life." The young prince died (March 15, 1440). Whereupon the czar ordered the execution of the Jewish physician in the market-place of Moscow. The Russian masses never saw any Jew with their own eyes and knew of them only by hearsay; but these reports painted the Jew in such colors as to render him odious in the eyes of the Greek orthodox Russians. The Jews shunned the Muscovite kingdom for this reason, but the baseless antipathy and hostility struck deep root in the hearts of the Russian masses.

THE HUMANISTIC AND REFORMATION PERIOD

CHAPTER I

THE HUMANISTS AND THE REFORMATION

(1500-1530)

No one would have suspected then that the German people, and the land of robber barons and of political anarchy could call into being a mighty movement that was to shake European conditions to their very depths, to create a new state of political affairs, and to deal a death-blow to Medievalism. A reformation of the Church and of political conditions of which enlightened spirits dreamed at that time was expected to emanate from Germany least of all. And yet there lay dormant in this people silent forces that needed only be awakened to leap into rejuvenescence. Among the Germans there existed as yet a greater simplicity and austerity, though pedantic and ridiculous on the surface, than in Italy, France, and Spain, where overrefinement, satiety and moral corruption had already set in. Just because the primitive Germanic bluntness persisted longest among the Germans, the demoralized clergy did not wholly succeed in infecting the Germans with the virus of their viciousness. In comparison with their brethren of the other European countries, the lower clergy of Germany were chaste and modest. In the educated circles of Rome and Italy, and in the papal court, above all, Christianity and its dogmas were laughed at, and were utilized solely for the political power that the Church conferred upon its official representatives. In Germany, on the other hand, Christianity was taken more seriously, was still regarded as an ideal that was once vital and that must be vitalized once more.

But these moral seeds were so hidden and buried that favorable circumstances were necessary to cause them to germinate and to stand out as historic forces. The awakening of these dormant forces was due largely and directly to the Talmud. One may boldly assert that the struggle for and against the Talmud awakened the consciousness of the Germans, and created a public opinion without which the reformation, like so many other attempts, would have died in the very hour of its birth, or would have been stifled before its birth. A mere grain of sand brought about a landslide.

The insignificant grain of sand was an ignorant, mean, Jewish wretch who deserves no mention but whom Providence seemed to have chosen as an unwilling instrument for the execution of a useful purpose. Joseph Pfefferkorn, a Moravian by birth, was a butcher by trade. His moral depravity was even greater than his ignorance. He was once caught in an act of thieving and was threatened with imprisonment, and it was only upon the urgent petition of his relatives and upon the payment of a fine that he was released. This stain, it seems, he desired to wipe off by means of baptismal water; and, as the church was not fastidious, he was admitted into the fold, with his wife and children, in his thirty-sixth year. The ignorant, arrogant and fanatic Dominicans of Cologne made much of him. Cologne was then the seat of vainglorious obscurantists who, owl-like, feared the light, and endeavored to obscure the dawn of a brighter day by the heavy fog of stupid belief. At the head of these obscurantists stood Hochstraten, an inquisitor, a violent, reckless man who absolutely yearned for the smell of burning flesh of heretics: Arnold of Tungern, professor of theology in the Dominican college, and Ortuin de Graes of Deventer (Ortuinus Gratius), the son of a priest who rivaled his father in this respect.

Ortuin de Graes hated the Jews so violently that that hatred could not have been inspired merely by religious zeal. He devoted his energies toward arousing the enmity of the Christians against the Jews by means of anti-Jewish writings. Too ignorant himself to write even a pamphlet, he induced Jewish apostates to furnish him with the necessary material. Victor von Karben, who for some reason embraced Christianity at the age of fifty, and who knew little Hebrew or Talmud though he was termed a rabbi to lend more weight to his statements, charged the Jews with entertaining malice against the Christians, and with despising everything Christian, and Ortuin Gratius embodied these charges against the Jews and their Talmud in a book. But Victor von Karben did not seem sufficiently serviceable or was too old to assist the Dominicans, as inquisitors of men and books, in the execution of a long-cherished plan by which they hoped to do a thriving business. Since their own order had recently fallen in utter contempt as a result of the rivalry between them and the Franciscans, the Dominicans needed a Jew in their scheme, and Pfefferkorn seemed more useful. He lent his name to a new anti-Jewish book which Ortuin de Graes again first wrote in Latin. He held up to the Jews a "Mirror of Admonition" (1507) to embrace Christianity. This first anti-Jewish book that bore Pfefferkorn's name was as yet comparatively mild in its tone; it pronounces the charges of theft and child-murder so frequently hurled against the Jews as false and slanderous, and appeals to the Christians not to banish the Jews and not to oppress them unbearably since they were human beings to some extent after all. This friendliness, however, was only a mask, only a feeler to gain the confidence of the Jews.

The Dominicans of Cologne were bent upon the confiscation of the Talmudic books, as in the days of St. Louis of France, and Pfefferkorn's first pamphlet was to pave the way for it by casting slurs upon the Talmud. The "Mirror" asserts that the practice of usury on the part of the Jews, their freedom from compulsory attendance of the churches, and their devotion to the Talmud were responsible for their indifference to Christianity. Were these obstacles removed, the Jews would flock to the Church in great numbers. The pamphlet therefore admonishes the princes and the peoples to put a stop to Jewish usury, to force the Jews to attend churches and to listen to sermons, and to burn the Talmud. It admits that it is not quite equitable to violate the property rights of the Jews by the destruction of their books, but inasmuch as the Christians never hesitated to commit all sorts of violence against the Jews, the confiscation of their copies of the Talmud is a matter of indifference.

It was then generally understood in Germany that the obscurantists of Cologne and Pfefferkorn expected to derive considerable profit from their agitation against the Talmud, if they could influence the princes and public opinion to order the confiscation of the Talmudic copies. The Dominicans, as the legal inquisitors, with authority to decide the fate of books, would be called in as the final arbiters, and the German Jews would naturally spare no money in order to save their beloved Talmud. With this object in view, the Dominicans, with Pfefferkorn as their puppet, circulated still more venomous pamphlets the following year (1508), in which they asserted that it was the duty of the Christians to drive the Jews out like mangy dogs. If the princes refused to give their consent, the people should take the matter in their own hands, should urge upon the princes first of all to take from the Jews by force all their securities and all their books with the exception of the Bible, then to take their children from them and rear them as Christians, and finally to expel the adults as incorrigible villains. It was no sin to inflict even the worst miseries upon Jews since they were not free men but only the property of the princes. If the princes refuse to grant the request of the people, let the people gather in force, create riot, and perform with violence their Christian duty to injure the Jews. The masses must assume the part of knights of Christ, and carry out his testament. Whoever inflicts injury upon the Jews is a true Christian; whoever seeks their welfare is worse than they are and is doomed to eternal damnation.

But Pfefferkorn, Ortuin Gratius and the Jew-baiters of Cologne were born somewhat too late. Murderous assaults upon the Jews were no longer in vogue, though the Jews were hated and despised no less than in the days of the crusades and of the Black Death. The princes were even less disposed to expel the Jews since such a procedure involved the loss of their regular revenues. Nor was there so much zeal displayed any more for the conversion of the Jews. Some Christians rather pointed in scorn and mockery at baptized Jews. Christians then likened a baptized Jew to pure white linen. So long as the linen is clean and fresh it rejoices the eye, used a few days it becomes soiled and is cast aside. Fresh from his baptism, a baptized Jew is made much of by the Christians; after a while he is neglected, avoided, excluded and even mocked at.

The German Jews who apprehended new dangers from Pfefferkorn's zeal endeavored to thwart him in every possible way. Jewish physicians who enjoyed the favor of princely courts seem to have used their influence with their patrons to pronounce Pfefferkorn's accusations false. The Dominicans, however, did not despair of accomplishing their ultimate object, the destruction of the Talmud. Realizing that the Emperor Maxmilian would not readily lend himself to an act of violence, they utilized the superstitious piety of his unhappy sister Kunigunde. This princess, the favorite daughter of Emperor Frederick III, had caused her aged father much sorrow by marrying secretly his open enemy, Duke Albrecht of Bavaria. Upon her husband's death (1508), the widowed Kunigunde, possibly driven by remorse for the fault of her youth, retired to a Franciscan convent in Munich. As the abbess of the nuns of St. Clare she mortified her flesh. This princess it was whom the Dominicans selected as their instrument. Provided with letters of introduction, Pfefferkorn gained access to her, described to her the disgraceful practices of the Jews, their contempt of Jesus, Mary, the apostles and the Church, and assured her that all this villainy is contained in the Jewish writings which, therefore, deserve destruction. The superstitious nun believed all these calumnies against the Jews all the more readily since she heard them from the mouth of a former Jew who must be familiar with the customs and evil practices of his former coreligionists, and particularly so upon his assurance that the destruction of the Jewish writings would gradually lead all the Jews to the acceptance of Christianity.

Pfefferkorn easily accomplished his purpose. Kunigunde gave him an urgent letter to her brother in which she adjured him to put a stop to the blasphemies of the Jews against Christianity, and to issue a decree that all Jewish books, with the exception of the Bible, be burned. Provided with this letter, Pfefferkorn betook himself at once to the emperor's camp, and with Kunigunde's fanatic appeal and his own verbal calumnies, he succeeded in obtaining a mandate from Maxmilian that conferred upon the renegade absolute power over the Jews (Aug. 19, 1509). He was given the right to examine Jewish writings in any part of the German empire, and to destroy those that were antagonistic to the Scriptures and to Christianity. The mandate warned the Jews to offer no resistance on pain of severe punishment, and to place their books at Pfefferkorn's disposal.

The triumphant Pfefferkorn hastened to return to Germany with the imperial mandate that made him master of the Jews, and began his activity in Frankfort, the then most important German community, that contained many wealthy Jews as well as many Talmudic scholars, and consequently many copies of the Talmud, and where, in addition, copies of the Talmud and kindred books were stored for sale at the fair. At Pfefferkorn's instance, the magistrates summoned all the Jews to the synagog and announced to them the imperial decree to surrender their books. In the presence of the clergy and of the magistrates, all prayer books found in the synagog were confiscated. This occurred on the eve of the Feast of Tabernacles (Friday, Sept. 28, 1509). Presuming upon the authority given him, Pfefferkorn forbade the Jews to visit the synagog on Friday, intending to search the Jewish houses for copies of the Talmud on this very day. The clergy present, however, were not so reckless as to convert the festival of the Jews into a day of sorrow, and postponed the search to the following Monday. The Jews, and this too was an indication of the spirit of a new age, protested against this act of violence, and submitted no longer tamely to robbery, plunder and death itself as was formerly the case in Germany. They invoked the chartered rights granted them by emperors and popes that guaranteed them religious liberty, including the right to possess their prayer and other religious books, and demanded that the confiscation of their books be postponed to enable them to appeal to the emperor and to the supreme court. In addition, the officials of the Frankfort community sent a deputy to the elector and archbishop of Mayence, Uriel von Gemmingen, whose diocese included Frankfort, to appeal to him to forbid the clergy to participate in this unjust cause. When Pfefferkorn began his search of the Jewish houses, a letter arrived from the archbishop forbidding the clergy to lend their assistance to Pfefferkorn. Pfefferkorn's scheme was thus frustrated, for the magistrates also withdrew as soon as they learned that the highest ecclesiastical dignitary of Germany stood on the side of the Jews. The Jews did not remain idle either, for although they did not know that the mighty Dominicans were behind Pfefferkorn, they suspected that their enemies were utilizing the malicious scoundrel for the purpose of evoking persecutions upon them. They at once sent a deputy, Jonathan Zion, to plead their cause with the emperor and messengers to the various communities of Germany to summon them to a general assembly to be held in the following month for the purpose of taking steps to avert the danger, and particularly to raise funds.

For the time being, this matter seemed to have taken a turn favorable to the Jews, particularly as a result of the attitude of the archbishop of Mayence. Whether prompted by a sense of justice, by friendship to the Jews, by an aversion to the Dominican inquisitors, or by offended pride because the emperor had encroached upon his prerogative, by conferring ecclesiastical jurisdiction upon such a scoundrel in his diocese, Uriel von Gemmingen embraced the cause of the Jews. He addressed a communication to the emperor (Oct. 5), wherein he gently reproved him for conferring plenary authority in this matter upon such an ignorant man, asserted that, to the best of his knowledge, the Jews of his diocese possessed no such blasphemous books that breathed hostility to Christianity, and suggested that if the emperor be determined upon an investigation and confiscation of Jewish writings, he entrust this task to a scholar who is familiar with Jewish literature. The archbishop, it is true, invited Pfefferkorn to his residence in Aschaffenburg, in order to appear impartial in the matter, but gave him to understand that the imperial mandate he brought with him contained an informality that rendered it null and void since the Jews could question its validity. In the course of this interview, the name of Reuchlin was mentioned for the first time either by Pfefferkorn or by the archbishop. The suggestion was made on that occasion to request the emperor to appoint Reuchlin, Victor von Karboen and a Dominican of Cologne as judges over the Jewish books together with Pfefferkorn.

He or the Dominicans expected to find an ally in Reuchlin, the pride of Germany, and thus strengthen their cause. It may also have been part of their scheme to compromise in one way or another this celebrated man who was looked at askance by the obscurantists because, to their chagrin, he was the first to stimulate the study of the Hebrew language among the Christians of Germany and of Europe in general. But this fine stratagem not only ruined completely the cause of Pfefferkorn and of his Dominican allies, but produced a storm that in less than a decade shook the entire structure of the Catholic Church to its foundation. Justly was it said later that this semi-Jewish Christian wrought greater harm to Christianity than all the anti-Jewish polemics could have done.

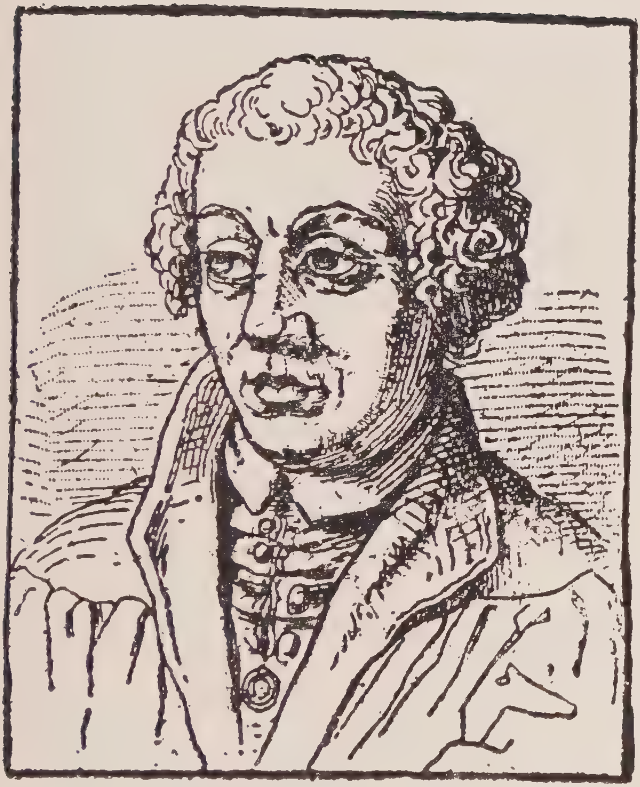
John Reuchlin of Pforzheim (1455-1522) was one of the builders of the bridge that led from mediaevalism into modernity, and occupies a position of eminence in the history of the sixteenth century. Under the Latin name of Capnio, he, together with his younger contemporary, Erasmus of Rotterdam, removed the stigma of barbarism from Germany, and proved by their example and far-reaching influence, that the Germans could vie with the Italians in the knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages, in the elegance of style and in humanistic culture in general. Alongside of his astounding knowledge of the classic literature and his elegance of style, Reuchlin possessed a sterling character, a noble mind, an incorruptible integrity and a great love of truth. More versatile than Erasmus, he devoted himself to the study of Hebrew, in order to master the sacred tongue and to resemble in this respect the church-father Jerome after whom he patterned himself. Reuchlin's love for the Hebrew language became even more fantastic when, upon his second journey to Rome, he met in Florence the learned youth Pico de Mirandola, the prodigy of Italy, and learned from him what profound, wonderful mysteries lay hidden in the Hebrew source of the cabala. Since that time, Reuchlin was consumed by a veritable thirst after Hebrew literature but could not quench it until he had reached middle age. While he was sojourning in Linz, at the court of the aged Emperor Frederick III, he made the acquaintance of the emperor's physician and Jewish knight Jacob Loans, and it was this scholar who introduced him to the Hebrew language and literature.

Reuchlin sought to utilize at once the knowledge of the Hebrew which he had acquired with so much zeal, and he wrote a little book, "Concerning the Wonderful Word," that is an enthusiastic panegyric of the Hebrew language: "The language of the Hebrews is simple, pure, sacred, brief and compact, in which God used to commune with men, and men with angels, directly and without interpreter, and speak as friend with friend." Reuchlin made it his task to prove that the wisdom of all nations, the symbols of the pagan religion and the forms of their cult were nothing else than misrepresentations and perversions of the Hebrew truth contained profoundly and mysteriously in the words, letters, and even in the form of the Hebrew characters. But fully realizing that his knowledge of Hebrew was as yet incomplete, Reuchlin took advantage of his presence in Rome, as ambassador from the Elector of the Palatinate to the court of Pope Alexander VI, to continue his study of Hebrew literature under another Jewish teacher, Obadiah Sforno. And thus, the German humanist, already a celebrated man, whose Latin orations were admired by Italians, sat at the feet of learned Jews in order to perfect himself in the Hebrew.

Inasmuch as Reuchlin was the only Christian in

Germany, and possibly in all Europe, who had mastered the Hebrew language, and as there were many who were as eager to acquire that language as the Greek, his numerous friends besought him to prepare a Hebrew grammar that would enable them to study the sacred tongue for themselves. The first Hebrew grammar written by a Christian, which Reuchlin designated as "a monument more lasting than brass" (completed March, 1506), was surely defective enough. It supplies only the rules that are indispensable to pronunciation and accidence, and is at once also a dictionary the incompleteness of which was inevitable in the work of a beginner. But this grammar stimulated the study of Hebrew among a large circle of humanists who devoted themselves to it henceforth with all their zeal. These studies produced a new ferment in the course of the Lutheran reformation. A number of Reuchlin's disciples, Sebastian Munster and Widmannstadt, followed in his footsteps, and raised the Hebrew language to a position of equality with the Greek.

Though Reuchlin condescended to enter the ghetto in order to reveal its hidden treasures, he was at the beginning no less prejudiced against the Jewish race than his contemporaries, and regarded the Jewish people not only as barbarians bereft of all sense of art, but also as a low and depraved race. He asserted most solemnly that he cherished no love for the Jews, and indicated, like his paragon St. Jerome, that he thoroughly hated the Jews. While engaged in writing his Hebrew grammar, he addressed a letter to one of the nobles in which he ascribed the wretchedness of the Jews to their stubborn unbelief, and charged them, no less than Pfefferkorn did, with calumniating Jesus, Mary, the apostles and Christians in general. Later on Reuchlin regretted the writing of this anti-Jewish



Johann Reuchlin

missive, for his heart did not share in the prejudices of his head. Whenever he met an individual Jew, he treated him if not with affection at least with respect. He realized that the Jews were not as black as they were painted. His sense of justice would not permit him to treat the Jews unjustly. But though Reuchlin did not thus far expose himself to the least suspicion of heresy, and stood on friendly terms with the Dominicans, the obscurantists regarded him instinctively as their secret enemy. The cultivation of knowledge, the occupation with the classic literature, the enthusiasm for the Greek language which Reuchlin first awakened in Germany, and, in addition, the introduction of the Hebrew tongue, and the preference he gave to the "Hebrew truth" over the corrupt Vulgate held as canonical in the Church—all these were regarded by the obscurantists as so many offences for which Reuchlin could not, indeed, be tried by the inquisition but which sufficed to place his name on their black list.

The instruction given to Pfefferkorn by the Dominicans to suggest Reuchlin as one of the investigators of the Jewish books was, as already indicated, a shrewdly laid trap. Accordingly, upon his second journey to the emperor's camp, Pfefferkorn visited Reuchlin in his home, showed him the imperial mandate and endeavored to persuade him to make common cause with the Dominicans. This Reuchlin declined, but is said to have declared his readiness to act as one of the judges if requested by the emperor. Pfefferkorn thereupon betook himself to the emperor to obtain a second properly prepared and incontestable mandate.

Jonathan Zion, the deputy of the Frankfort community, and Isaac Triest, a Jew who was popular with the emperor's entourage, exerted themselves meanwhile to frustrate Pfefferkorn's scheme; and they were supported by the representative of the archbishop and by the margrave of Baden. The Jewish deputies first urged the chartered privileges conferred upon them by emperors and popes which guaranteed them religious liberty and in accordance with which the emperor had no right to interfere in their internal affairs, in the possession of their religious literature. Nor did they fail to remind the emperor that their accuser was a depraved creature, a thief, and a house robber. The Jewish deputies flattered themselves that they gained the victory. The emperor had granted them an audience and finally appointed their friend, Uriel of Gemmingen, as commissioner in the matter. But they were not acquainted with Maximilian's vacillating character. As soon as Pfefferkorn appeared before him with an autograph letter from his sister in which the zealous nun adjured him not to injure Christianity by revoking his mandate, the scales turned against the Jews. Moreover, it annoyed the emperor that the Jews had dared resist his mandate and refused to surrender their books. He thereupon issued a second mandate (Nov. 10, 1509), in which he ordered the continuance of the confiscation, and appointed the archbishop Uriel of Gemmingen commissioner, but suggested that he add to the commission learned men from the universities of Cologne, Mayence, Erfurt and Heidelberg, and scholars like Reuchlin, Victor von Karben and the inquisitor Hochstraten, though the latter was totally ignorant of Hebrew.

With this mandate in his pocket, Pfefferkorn hastened to return to the scene of his activity in the Rhine region. Archbishop Uriel delegated the regent of the university of Mayence to supervise the confiscation in behalf of the Jews. Pfefferkorn accompanied him to Frankfort and began anew the hunt for Hebrew books. Fifteen hundred manuscripts were thus taken from the Jews of Frankfort and deposited in the town-hall. Pfefferkorn busied himself with much zeal in other cities too.

As a result of the issuance of the second imperial mandate, the larger German communities that hitherto remained indifferent to the appeal of the Frankfort community for assistance, now joined hands, and bestirred themselves for the common cause. The municipal authorities of Frankfort were inclined to favor the Jews. Jewish booksellers used to bring their books and put them up for sale at the spring fair held at Frankfort, but when Pfefferkorn threatened to confiscate these, too, the authorities of Frankfort refused to assist him because it involved a violation of the fair rights. Besides, the Jewish book dealers held passports from the princes and the lords of their respective homes that protected not only their persons but also their property. The archbishop Uriel held aloof, but was inclined to favor the Jews. He did not summon the learned men designated by the emperor to examine the Jewish books, and did no more than he was compelled to do. Several princes, too, whose eyes the Jews opened to the import of this singualr confiscation, complained to the emperor, it seems. Public opinion in particular was against Pfefferkorn.

However, Pfefferkorn and the Dominicans did not rest either, but made efforts to win the emperor and public opinion in their favor. With this object in view there appeared a new libel against the Jews under Pfefferkorn's name: "In Praise and Honor of Emperor Maximilian," that showered fulsome flattery upon the emperor, and expressed regret that the charges against the Jews were treated with indifference in Christian circles out of levity and want of judgment. The Dominicans sought to bring moral pressure to bear upon Maximilian through public opinion. But public opinion must have been so strongly against the obscurantists that Maximilian found himself called upon to order the authorities of Frankfort to restore their books to the Jews (May 23, 1510), until the investigation of the books was completed.

The Jews rejoiced greatly at this victory that delivered them from a great danger. For it was not a question merely of their literature which was dear to them, but of their position in the German-Roman empire. But their triumph was premature. The Dominicans did not abandon so easily the advantages they had already gained, and an untoward incident in the March of Brandenburg supplied them with new grounds for accusations. A thief who had stolen from a church a ciborium with a golden pyx confessed that he had sold the sacred vessels to the Jews of Brandenburg. As a matter of course, the thief's statement found implicit credence. The Bishop of Brandenburg persecuted the Jews with glowing zeal, and the elector Joachim I had the accused brought to Berlin. To the charge of sacrilege there was added to that of child-murder, and upon Joachim's order the accused were tortured and thirty-eight of them were burned. The martyrs of Brandenburg went to their death (July 19, 1510) unafraid, chanting psalms, with the exception of two who submitted to baptism and were condemned to an apparently more honorable death by decapitation. This incident which, by the way, contains the earliest reference to the Jews of Brandenburg and Berlin, excited a great deal of attention in Germany and was utilized by the Dominicans to turn the emperor against the Jews. They appealed once more to Kunigunde, impressed upon her the vileness of the Jews as illustrated by the Brandenburg episode, and indicated that the emperor by ordering the return of their books to the Jews, approved, as it were, the aspersions upon Christianity contained in them. Kunigunde, accordingly, had an interview with her brother in Munich and adjured him on bended knees and with streaming eyes to destroy the Jewish books. Maximilian found himself in an embarrassing situation. While he was eager to please his beloved sister, he was, on the other hand, suspicious of Pfefferkorn's motives. He therefore resorted to an expedient that seemed fair to both sides. He issued a new mandate (July 6, 1510), the fourth in this affair, in which he requested the archbishop Uriel to solicit opinions on the subject from German universities, and particularly from Reuchlin, Victor of Karben and Hochstraten. The final decision of these judges was to be delivered to the emperor by Pfefferkorn as the prime mover of the whole affair.

The Jews awaited the decision with great anxiety, for their weal and woe depended upon it. But Reuchlin's opinion proved a veritable godsend to them. Though written in the pedantic and dull style of the day, it does not want in skill. He proceeds from the correct point of view that, in answering this question, the Jewish books are not to be treated as a whole, as a homogeneous literature, but must be divided into six distinct classes. The class of biblical commentaries, the works of Rashi, Ibn Ezra, the Kimhis Moses Gerundi and Levi ben Gerson, is far from being prejudicial to Christianity, but is rather indispensable to Christian theology. The best that is contained in the commentaries on the Old Testament written by learned Christians is derived from the Jews as the well whence flows the real truth and the correct knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures. Remove from the comprehensive writing of Nicholas de Lyra, the best Christian commentator, the elements he borrowed from Rashi and his original contributions will dwindle down to but a few pages. It is, moreover, a disgrace that many doctors of Christian theology are guilty of misinterpreting the Bible for lack of knowledge of Hebrew and Greek. The class of Hebrew literature that treats of philosophy, natural science and the liberal arts is in no way different from similar works in Greek, Latin or German. With reference to the Talmud itself, the chief object of attack, Reuchlin acknowledges that he knows nothing at all about it, but not less than other Christian scholars who condemn it, nevertheless, on the mere charges of its opponents such as Pfefferkorn. But how can one write against mathematics without knowing anything about it? His opinion is therefore that the Talmud *should not be burned,* even if it be true that, among other things, it contains some aspersions upon Christianity. "Were the Talmud so damnable as it is asserted, our forefathers who took the Christian faith more seriously than we of today would have destroyed it long ago. Baptized Jews like Peter Schwarz and Pfefferkorn, the only ones who insist upon its destruction, are possibly actuated by private ends." Reuchlin concludes that the Jews should by no means be deprived of their books, and suggests rather that in each German university there be appointed two professors of Hebrew as well as rabbinics. If treated with kindness the Jews might ultimately be attracted to Christianity.

In all the ages of Christianity's persecution of the Jews, the latter surely never found such a kindly disposed advocate as Reuchlin who, in addition, defended them in an official declaration addressed to the chancellor and the emperor. Two points which Reuchlin emphasized were of especial importance to the Jews. The first was that the Jews were fellow citizens of the German-Roman empire, and therefore entitled to equal rights and protection. This was, as it were, the first stuttering expression of the cheering words of equal rights that required more than three centuries before they could be spoken plainly and gain recognition. It dealt a blow to the mediaeval superstition that, through the conquest of Jerusalem by Vespasian and Titus, the Jews became the personal property of their successors, the Roman and German emperors. The Jews, too, have rights which the emperor himself, and the civil and ecclesiastical authorities must respect—this was the first faint, quivering ray of light that appeared on the horizon after the long, dismal night of the Middle Ages. The second point of no less significance which Reuchlin emphasized more openly was that the Jews should not be regarded and treated as heretics. Inasmuch as they stood outside of the pale of the Church and are not forced to accept Christianity, the concepts of heresy and unbelief, fatal words in medievalism, were not at all applicable to them.

The advantage that redounded to the Jews from Reuchlin's opinion may be seen from the decision of the learned faculties that were consulted. Though the Talmud was a sealed book to them, the Dominicans of Cologne, the theological faculties, the inquisitor Hochstraten and the aged apostate Victor von Karken took it rather for granted that the Talmud contained statements that were prejudicial and hostile to Christianity, and decided at once that the Talmudic as well as all other books written in the same spirit be taken from the Jews and burned. They, and particularly Hochstraten, went so far as to propose that the Jews be placed on trial for heresy. They suggested that a learned commission be appointed to abstract and compile all the objectionable passages found in the Talmud and other Jewish books. The Jews should then be requested to state whether or not they believed in the books wherein such prejudicial passages are found. If they answer in the negative, they could then raise no objection to the burning of such vicious and heretical books. If they reply in the affirmative, the emperor should turn them over to the inquisitors as downright heretics. The faculty of Mayence rendered a similar verdict, but went still further. Inasmuch as they had been informed that not only the Talmudic and rabbinic books, but also the Sacred Scriptures were full of errors and heresies, therefore the Hebrew Scriptures, too, should be taken from the Jews, subjected to an investigation, and, in case they are found to disagree with the Catholic faith, be consigned to the flames. Inasmuch as the Hebrew text differed considerably from the corrupt Latin text of the vulgate which was used in the Church, the Dominicans hit upon this scheme to rid themselves once for all of the inconvenient Hebrew text, the "Hebrew truth." Happily, the Dominicans themselves thwarted their own shrewd scheme by a piece of knavery.

Reuchlin had forwarded his favorable opinion of the Jewish literature under seal and through a sworn messenger to the archbishop Uriel of Mayence, under the impression that, as an official secret, it would be opened and read only by him and by the emperor. But Pfefferkorn, by some means or other, managed to get it into his hands, with the seal broken, even before the emperor received it. Reuchlin designated the Dominicans of Cologne outright as seal breakers. Be that as it may, one may almost be grateful to them for giving publicity to a matter that, at the beginning, was hidden in official secrecy, thus creating a new tribunal and shifting the danger from the Jews to the Church. The Dominicans were beside themselves with anger at Reuchlin's opinion because his voice carried much weight with the emperor and his advisers. They therefore issued at once a passionate refutation of his arguments in favor of the Jews and their literature, and in the German language, to gain it a wider circulation and thereby arouse the fanaticisms of the multitudes to such an extend that the emperor would find it inexpedient to listen to Reuchlin. This libel, the "Hand-Mirror," written by the Dominicans, bore Pfefferkorn's name, and was widley circulated.

This attack upon a person of such eminence and learning as Reuchlin naturally created an extraordinary sensation. Reuchlin's friends, and they were not a few, were very indignant at the impudence of a baptized Jew who claimed to be more orthodox than an honored, born Christian. The Dominicans of Cologne had yielded to their hatred beyond the point of prudence. Reuchlin could not ignore such attacks; his honor was too deeply wounded. He first complained to the emperor of Pfefferkorn's calumnies, and Miximilian calmed him and promised to have the matter investigated. But in the press of his affairs, in the complication of the Italian squabble, he forgot, as the great of the earth do at all times, Reuchlin, the insult offered him, and the satisfaction he had promised him. Reuchlin was thus compelled to make the cause of the Talmud a personal matter, to appeal to public opinion as judge, and thereby lend to the affair an aspect of unusual importance. Accordingly, he wrote a refutation of his own, under the title of "Mirror of the Eyes," or "Eye Glasses" (end of August or beginning of September, 1511), which achieved a historic fame and proved epoch-making. In this book he pointed out to the German public the villainies of Pfefferkorn and his associates, but in doing so he also, unconsciously, laid bare the shortcomings of the Christianity of his day.

In simple words Reuchlin tells the details of Pfefferkorn's plot against the Talmud, communicates the documents addressed to him by the emperor and by archbishop Uriel and his reply, and gives an account of how Pfefferkorn managed to obtain that reply in some dishonorable manner, and had written a libel against it that contained no less than thirty-four falsehoods. The entire tone of the "Eye Mirror" is one of indignation, and Reuchlin resents with particular passion the charge that he had written his vindication of the Talmud for money. Reuchlin was no less resentful of the disparagement of his Hebrew knowledge, and of the charge that his Hebrew grammar was written by some one else. He denies that intercourse with Jews, for which Pfefferkorn had reproached him, was forbidden by Christianity, cites the example of St. Jerome and Nicholas de Lyra who had acquired their knowledge of Hebrew from Jewish teachers, and concludes that the commandment "Love thy neighbor as thyself" obligates the Christians to love Jews too.

One can imagine the sensation produced by Reuchlin's "Eye Mirror," which was likewise written in German, when it appeared during the Frankfort fair, the meeting place for thousands of people at a time when publicity was as yet unknown, and everyone paid the utmost attention to a scandal. That a celebrated man like Reuchlin should characterize a detractor of Jews as a calumniator, liar and rascal was so strange and unheard of that the readers could hardly realize it. The Jews seized upon Reuchlin's book even more eagerly because it was the first time that a man of eminence, carrying great weight, entered the lists in their behalf, and stigmatized the oft repeated charges against them as calumnies. They rejoiced that they had found a champion at last, and naturally exerted themselves to circulate Reuchlin's work as widely as possible. For the most part, however, the obscurantists of Cologne, by their very condemnation of Reuchlin, themselves assisted in the dissemination of his work. Reuchlin received congratulations from all sides for his exposure of Pfefferkorn and his supporters.

With the publication and circulation of Reuchlin's "Eye Mirror" and his defense of the Talmud there began a struggle that grew more serious day by day, assumed an ever wider extent, and received a significance reaching far beyond the question at issue. For the obscurantists, who were still in full possession of their power and their means of intimidation, did not receive Reuchlin's challenge with indifference. After all, Pfefferkorn's cause was their own, and now a man appeared who dared thwart their schemes, refused to sanction the condemnation of the Talmud, but regarded it rather as indispensable to Christianity to some extent, disapproved of the persecution of Jews, and recommended, on the contrary, that they be loved! What an impudence! Their zeal threw them in such an unholy fury that they overreached themselves and committed folly upon folly that seriously injured their cause.

Peter Mayer, a town preacher of Frankfort-on-the-Main, who failed in his efforts to have the sale of the "Eye Mirror" prohibited, committed another blunder. He announced from the pulpit that Pfefferkorn would preach on a certain day against Reuchlin's defense of the Jews, and exhorted the faithful to attend in large numbers. This step, however, was a serious blunder. Pfefferkorn, with his ugly form, with his distinctive Jewish features, and with an air that betrayed meanness, was to preach to a Christian public in a Jewish-German jargon when his every word and every movement must excite the laughter of his audience! Moreover, the Catholic law strictly forbade a layman, and a married layman at that, to exercise the function of a priest. Only a few years before an artless shepherd was condemned to death by fire for presuming to preach. To obviate this difficulty, Pfefferkorn preached on the appointed day (Sept. 7, 1511), not in the church but at its entrance before a large multitude. His sermon only excited the risibilities of his audience, though his main purpose was to arouse the enmity of his auditors against the Jews and their defenders.

Hitherto, the prime mover of the whole scandal, the malicious inquisitor, Jacob Hochstraten, kept in the background, and only sent his creatures to the firing line, first Pfefferkorn, then Ortuin Gratius and Arnold von Tongern. Henceforth, however, he stepped to the front with supreme arrogance, defying all law and custom. In order to save the impaired influence of their order by violent means, all Dominicans had to make common cause and to employ all their zeal to accomplish the destruction of Reuchlin and of the Talmud. Ostensibly, upon the authority of his provincial, Hochstraten, as inquisitor, summoned Reuchlin (Sept. 15, 1513), to appear in Mayence within six days at eight o'clock in the morning to stand trial for his favoritism to the Jews and for suspicions of heresy. He had prepared in advance a passionate indictment against Reuchlin's "Eye Mirror" and the Talmud, and had gained the support of four universities that had shortly before condemned Reuchlin's work. On the appointed day (Sept. 20), Hochstraten was in Mayence with a band of Dominicans and appeared at once as an accuser and judge.

The charges he advanced were naturally the same formerly raised by Pfefferkorn and Arnold von Tongern against the "Eye Mirror"; Reuchlin favored the Jews too much, "regarded them, the insolent dogs," almost as human beings entitled to equal rights, and his work savored too much of heresy. Hochstraten proposed, therefore, that the commission pronounce the sentence that Reuchlin's "Eye Mirror" was full of heresies and errors, was too partial to the unbelieving Jews, and insulting to the Church, and is therefore to be damned, suppressed and consigned to the flames. One must not overlook in this connection the great difference between a German and a Spanish inquisitorial tribunal. A Torquemada or a Ximenes de Cisneros would have without much ceremony consigned to the flames the author together with his book. Hochstraten was by no means above such a sentence, but he dared not pronounce it because all Germany, the spiritual as well as the temporal powers, would have risen against him.

This trial, originating in injustice and conducted in violation of all formality, aroused the indignation of many honorable men, and especially of Reuchlin's numerous friends and admirers. The students of the University of Mayence protested loudly against this shameless inquisitorial proceeding and induced the doctors of jurisprudence to join them, and this led also serious-minded men of influence to intercede. To the surprise of the Dominicans the already aged, venerable Reuchlin appeared in Mayence, accompanied by two eminent counsellors of the Duke of Wurtemberg. The chapter, thereupon, made strenuous efforts to bring about a compromise, but Hochstraten would listen to no such suggestion, and postponed the trial to the 12th of October when the final verdict was to be announced.

The inquisitor had already instructed all the priests of Mayence to announce from their pulpits that everyone, Christian or Jew, was expected, on pain of severe punishment, to deliver the copies of the "Eye Mirror" to be consigned to the flames. In addition, the people were promised indulgence for three hundred days if they assembled in the church square on the appointed day to witness the auto-da-fé and lend dignity to it. On the appointed day the square of the church in Mayence was, in fact, crowded with spectators, composed of the curious, sympathizers, and those who desired indulgence. Proudly the fathers and the brothers of the Dominican Order and theologians of the Universities of Cologne, Loewen and Erfurt who were invited to witness the spectacle stepped on the platform erected for the occasion. Hochstraten, hitherto the accuser, again took his seat among the judges. He was already on the point of announcing the execratory and of kindling the fire when a messenger arrived from the Archbishop Uriel that sealed his lips. Uriel of Gemmingen, like most bishops of his time, was more worldly than spiritual. He, too, was indignant at the presumption of the Dominicans, and at their unjust proceedings against Reuchlin. He therefore addressed an order to the commissioners selected from his bishopric to postpone their decision for a month for the purpose of further mediation; in case of refusal, they were thereby removed from office as inquisitors and all their decisions were null and void. The Dominicans listened, dumfounded, to this letter read aloud by the archbishop's notary. Hochstraten alone dared at first utter some words of defiance. His associates, however, slunk away with bowed heads, pursued by the jeers of the street urchins and by the shout of adults: "Would that these brothers were burned at the stake who wished to heap such disgrace upon an honorable man!" Hermann vom Busche, the missionary of humanistic culture (as David Strauss styles him) and Ulrich von Hutten, the knight of right and truth, commemorated Reuchlin's victory in an enthusiastic poem, "Reuchlin's Triumph."

That the Jews also rejoiced in the outcome of this trial goes without saying, for, after all, it was their welfare that was at stake in the first place. For had Reuchlin's "Eye Mirror" been condemned, no Christian, no matter how kindly inclined, would have dared embrace his cause unless he wished to expose himself to the suspicion of heresy and to punishment at the hands of the church. Moreover, if the Dominicans had their way, Jewish literature too would have been solemnly pronounced heretical. If it is true, as the Dominicans told, that the rabbis from all over Germany assembled in a synod in Worms and declared that the defeat of the Dominicans presaged the fall of the Roman (papal) empire, then they surely possessed a prophetic vision.

Reuchlin, however, was not yet in a position to triumph over his enemies. He was too well familiar with their cunning and malice, and he realized that they would henceforth redouble their persecutions. He therefore hastened to give notice of an appeal to the papal throne in the hope that the pope might silence his enemies. But fearing that his cause might receive scant justice as a result of the unreliability and venality of the papal curia, he addressed a Hebrew letter to Bonet de Lates, the Jewish private physician of the then pope Leo X, requesting him to intercede with the pope in his behalf.

Leo, a member of the illustrious family of the Medici, had ascended the papal throne only a few months before. He was an aristocrat who interested himself in politics more than in religion, who was more of a Roman pagan than a Catholic Christian, who from his Olympic height looked down with contempt upon theological disputes as child's play, and whose chief concern was to veer the papal ship of state without endangering her temporal power between the mutually hostile states of Austria and France or, more correctly, between the houses of Hapsburg and Valois. With surprising frankness this pope gave utterance to this statement: "The great advantage that the fable of Christ had proven to us and to ours at all times is well known." And it was this pope who was to decide the question whether or not Reuchlin's "Eye Mirror" savored of heresy and whether or not it favored the Jews unduly. To Leo the theological question that threatened to set Europe on fire during his papacy had no meaning whatever, and it was therefore a matter of importance in what light the dispute between Reuchlin and the Dominicans was presented to him. Reuchlin therefore requested Bonet de Lates, to whom was entrusted the "body of His Holiness," to intercede with the pope to the end that the investigation be not conducted in Cologne or in its vicinity where he could obtain no justice. Reuchlin narrated the history of the conspiracy of Pfefferkorn and the Dominicans against the Talmud and the Jews, and the extraordinary efforts by which he had saved the Talmud from the flames. Had Reuchlin's letter fallen into the hands of the Dominicans and were they in a position to read it, they would have had proof positive of Reuchlin's friendship for the Jews, for it admitted many things which he concealed in his public statements.

It is self-evident that Bonet de Lates used his influence with the pope in behalf of Reuchlin, and it was due probably to his intercession that Leo issued a brief so quickly (Nov. 21, 1513) to the bishops of Speyer and Worms to decide the point at issue between Reuchlin and Hochstraten. Dahlberg, the bishop of Worms, a friend of Reuchlin's, declined to accept the commission, and so the young bishop of Speyer, George, elector and duke of Bavaria, appointed two judges who summoned both parties to appear before their tribunal within a month. Reuchlin, accompanied by an attorney and friends, appeared promptly. Hochstraten, on the other hand, counting on the power of the Dominicans, ignored the summons and openly defied the commission, the bishop, and even the pope. The judges, possibly out of fear of the Dominicans' vengeance, conducted the trial at first in a rather spiritless manner, and the case dragged along for three months (June-April, 1514). But they finally decided in Reuchlin's favor, that his "Eye Mirror" contained or savored of no errors or heresies, that he did not favor the Jews unduly, that Hochstraten, therefore, had slandered the author, and silence should be imposed upon him in this matter; that the "Eye Mirror" might be read and printed by everyone, and that Hochstraten be condemned to pay the costs (111 Rhenish gold florins).

The Dominicans of Cologne gnashed their teeth and raved at this verdict, but never thought of submitting to the decision of the apostolic commission. If, under the conditions of anarchy then prevailing in Germany, it was generally difficult to carry the sentence of a judge into execution, the Dominicans were still less inclined to pay any attention to a judicial decision that was unfavorable to them. They laughed at the verdict of the bishop of Speyer as emanating from a silly youth. The announcement of the decision posted in Cologne Pfefferkorn tore down with his own hands. Without notifying the bishop of Speyer, who had officiated as an apostolic judge, Hochstraten appealed to the pope, relying upon the venality of the Roman curia, "for Reuchlin was poor, while the Dominicans were rich," and upon the assistance of several cardinals, obscurantists like himself, to obtain a reversal of the verdict, or at least to protract the trial until Reuchlin's slender means were exhausted. The Dominicans expected besides that several universities, and particularly that of Paris, would condemn the "Eye Mirror," and such condemnation would carry great weight with the papal curia. All Dominicans and obscurantists, within and without Germany, made therefore common cause to bring about Reuchlin's fall.

But these exertions on the part of the Dominicans did not fail to arouse the friends of classic culture, the enemies of scholasticism, of obscurantism and of the theology of the Church, in a word, the humanists, to combine for concerted action on their part too. A veritable Humanistic Order arose, a party of Reuchlinists, the members of which ardently embraced Reuchlin's cause. One encouraged the other, saying: "Be courageous. All who belong to the army of Pallas are devoted to Reuchlin no less than soldiers are to the emperor." And thus Pfefferkorn's venomous hostility to the Talmud and the Jews gave birth to two parties in Christendom: the Reuchlinists and the Arnoldists (as the Dominicans were called), that engaged in a bitter struggle—the struggle between the night of medievalism and the dawn of a better day.

Young Germany, as represented by Hermann vom Busche, Gratus Rubianus (Johann Jaeger) and the impassioned Ulrich von Hutten, was particularly ardent in its support of Reuchlin. As a matter of fact, Ulrich von Hutten, who dedicated his life and his genius to freeing Germany from the shackles of superstition and barbarism and who was then twenty-six years of age, first became conscious of his real mission through this bitter combat between Reuchlin and the Dominicans. But mature men also, men of dignity and of influence, rallied to

Reuchlin's support. Among these were the Duke of Ulrich of Wurtemberg and his entire court, Count von Helfenstein in Augsburg, the canon Count von Nuenar, the patricians Welser, Pirkheimer and Peutinger in Ratisbon, Nuremberg and Augsburg, with their following, many provosts, canons and capitulars, and even cardinals and high ecclesiastical dignitaries in Italy. Egidio de Viterbo, the general of the Augustines in Rome, the patron and disciple of Elijah Levita, who was a lover of Jewish literature and at whose instance the Zohar was translated into Latin, wrote to Reuchlin: "The Torah, revealed to man in the midst of fire, was first rescued from the fire when Abraham was saved from the fiery furnace, and was now rescued from the fire for the second time by Reuchlin. These books are the light of the world, and their destruction would plunge the world in eternal darkness. In embracing thy cause, we defend not thee, but the law; not the Talmud, but the Church." It is worthy of notice that the Franciscans, out of hatred of the Dominicans, supported Reuchlin.

In nearly every important city there were Reuchlinists and anti-Reuchlinists, who carried their hostilities not rarely to the point of violence. The slogan of the one party was the saving of the "Eye Mirror" and of the Talmud, and of the other the condemnation and burning of both. Involuntarily, the Reuchlinists became also friends of the Jews and sought for reasons to defend them. The followers of the Dominicans, on the other hand, became still more embittered enemies of the Jews.

This quarrel soon attracted the attention of all Europe, and the scene of conflict was shifted to Rome and Paris. Hochstraten and the Dominicans concentrated all their efforts upon obtaining a reversal of the verdict of Speyer from the University of Paris, then the greatest Catholic university, and from the papal curia, and upon a condemnation of Reuchlin's book. They had influential allies in both places. Reuchlin, on his part, though he had won his case in the apostolic court of Speyer, was also compelled to take steps to thwart the intrigues of his enemies, and to render their appeal ineffective. Through the influence of his friends, Pope Leo X appointed cardinal and patriarch Dominico Grimani, who was known as a lover of rabbinic literature and of the cabala and who, as a patron of the Franciscan Order, hated the Dominicans, to act as a judge in this controversy. There is no doubt that influential Roman Jews were likewise active in Reuchlin's behalf, but these, like the German Jews, wisely kept in the background for fear that their open support might compromise Reuchlin's cause and lend it the appearance of a purely Jewish matter. Cardinal Grimani thereupon issued a summons to both parties (June, 1514) to appear before him, but while he insisted that Hochstraten appear in person, he permitted Reuchlin, in consideration of his advanced age, to send a representative. The inquisitor came to Rome provided with letters of introduction and with a full purse, and confident of victory. What could not be accomplished in Rome with money? Reuchlin, on the other hand, had nothing to offer; he was poor, but he did not lack in letters of recommendation. The Emperor Maximilian himself interceded with the pope in his behalf. Realizing his folly in listening to Pfefferkorn in the first place, the emperor addressed a letter to the pope in which he stated that he was sensible of the intrigues of the Dominicans of Cologne against the innocent, learned and orthodox Reuchlin, and that what the latter wrote (in favor of Jewish literature) was done upon his (the emperor's) order with a good intent and to the benefit of Christendom. The Dominicans, however, defied both the emperor and the pope. They threatened to join forces with the Hussites of Bohemia against the pope if the question were decided in favor of Reuchlin, and applied abusive epithets to the emperor when they learned that he had interceded with the pope in Reuchlin's favor.

Above all, the Dominicans set their hopes upon the decision of the University of Paris, the mother of all European academies. Should this eminent theological faculty condemn Reuchlin's book and the Talmud, the pope himself would not dare oppose its decision. They therefore left no stone unturned to induce the University of Paris to decide in their favor. Special pressure was brought to bear upon Louis XII, king of France, by his father-confessor Guillaume Hacquinet Petit to influence the theological faculty in favor of the Dominicans. Politics that set France and Germany at variance also played a part in this controversy. Because the emperor of Germany embraced the cause of Reuchlin, the king of France decided to embrace the cause of the Dominicans. Inasmuch as Reuchlin had many and warm friends in Paris, too, the deliberations of the theological faculty extended four months, (May—beginning of August, 1514). In the end Reuchlin's friends were silenced. Many French theologians took as their guide the precedent set by St. Louis of France who had ordered the burning of the Talmud three centuries before at the instance of the apostate Nicholas Donin, and upon the order of Pope Gregory IX. The theological faculty of Paris decided accordingly that inasmuch as Reuchlin's "Eye Mirror" contained heresies and zealously defended the Talmudic literature, it deserved to be burned.

Great was the joy of the Dominicans at this decision. This, they believed, assured them final victory and would compel the pope himself to submit to it.

They hastened therefore to publish the decision of the University of Paris in a new libel. Meanwhile, the trial of the case in Rome, extraordinarily slow at best, was purposely protracted still longer by the Dominicans. Hochstraten had appended to his bill of indictment a translation of the "Eye Mirror" which deviated from the original in many places, and ascribed to the author heretical statements not found in the original. The commission, it is true, had another faithful translation made by a German scholar, Martin von Groeningen, to which again the Dominicans took exception. The trial dragged along in this fashion, and Reuchlin's expenses amounted already to over four hundred gold florins. It was the object of the Dominicans to reduce their enemy to poverty, and thus prevent him from obtaining his rights. Reuchlin's prospects of victory in Rome became more and more remote. For this reason Reuchlin's friends determined to create another tribunal for the question at issue, to appeal from the ill-advised or intimidated pope to public opinion.

While all Europe was eagerly awaiting the outcome of Reuchlin's trial in Rome, one of the younger humanists (probably Crotus Rubianus of Leipsic) wrote a book under the title of "Letters of the Obscurantists" (*Epistolae Obscurorum Virorum,* published in the course of 1515), which surpassed everything hitherto written in wit, humor and biting satire. These letters, addressed for the most part to the base Ortuin Gratius, reproduced faithfully the language of the coarse monks, and laid bare most strikingly their baseness of mind, their arrogance, ignorance, lasciviousness, their malignity and obscenity, their wretched Latin and their still more wretched morals. All the enemies of Reuchlin—Hochstraten, Arnold von Tongern, Ortuin Gratius, Pfefferkorn and their accomplices, the theological faculty of the University of Paris, were unmercifully scourged with thorns and scorpions. Inasmuch, however, as the Dominicans with their arrogant ignorance and flagrant vices were the natural outgrowth of the Catholic ecclesiastical system, the author could not hold the obscurantists up to ridicule without exposing at the same time the corruption of the papacy, of the entire hierarchial tyranny, and of the Church in general.

The Jews and the Talmud, as the prime cause of the present quarrel, could not, of course, be ignored in the "Letters of the Obscurantists." In one letter, a certain master, John Pellifex, submits a question of conscience to the so-called spiritual father Ortuin Gratius. During the recent fair in Frankfort, while in company with a young theologian, he passed two respectable-looking men who were clad in black mantles and cowls, and taking them for priests, he bowed to them and removed his cap. To his consternation, his companion called his attention to the fact that they were Jews, and maintained that he, in doing them reverence, had committed a mortal sin bordering on idolatry. For in doing honor to a Jew, a Christian violates Christianity, inasmuch as the Jews are thereby encouraged to persist in their infidelity and are thus led to despise the Christian faith and to decline baptism (all these being the stock arguments of the Dominicans). The young theologian thereupon tells the story of how he once made a genuflexion in the church in front of the image of a Jew with a hammer in his hand, under the impression that it was St. Peter, and when he discovered his mistake, upon closer observation, and repeated his error to his Dominican father-confessor, the latter told him that he had committed a mortal sin that could be absolved only by a bishop. Had he committed the same sin consciously, only the pope could have absolved him. The young theologian therefore advised Pellifex to make confession of his sin in bowing to the Jews because, had he been a closer observer he would have recognized them as Jews by the yellow wheel on their cloaks. Pellifex accordingly asked Ortuin Gratius whether in doing what he had done, he had committed a mortal or a pardonable sin, whether it was a case that could be absolved by an ordinary priest, or required absolution from a bishop or from the pope himself. The other letters are written in a similar strain, and ridicule unmercifully the baseness and the sophistry of the scholastic theologians.

A roar of laughter rang throughout Western Europe at the reading of the "Letters of the Obscurantists." It is said that Erasmus, who had been suffering from an ulcer in his throat, laughed so heartily on reading these letters that his ulcer broke and he recovered his health. Various conjectures were made as to the authorship of these letters. Some ascribed them to Erasmus, Hutten or to other humanists. When the question of the authorship was put to Hutten, he replied: "God Himself." Far-sighted Reuchlinists recognized the finger of God in the historic significance assumed by the quarrel that began over the comparatively unimportant question of the burning of the Talmud.

But while Europe was laughing over these letters, the German Jews could not indulge in laughter. The Dominicans had meanwhile employed other means to accomplish their object, or at least to avenge themselves on the Jews. What profited it the Jews that several enlightened Christians conceived a predilection for Judaism and expressed their convictions in their publications? Christian society as a whole thoroughly hated Judaism and its adherents. Erasmus said truly: "If it be Christian to hate the Jews, then are we very Christian."

For this reason, it was an easy matter for their enemies to injure them. Pfefferkorn had frequently remarked that only three large communities were still left in Germany: Ratisbon, Frankfort and Worms, and that with the destruction of these Germany would rid herself of the Jews once for all. The Jew-baiters accordingly concocted a scheme for the expulsion of the Jews from Frankfort and Worms. Probably at the instigation of the Dominicans of Cologne they induced the young margrave, Albert of Brandenburg, who was recently elected archbishop of Mayence, to invite the lords temporal and spiritual and the representatives of the cities, particularly those of Frankfort and Worms, to assemble in Frankfort for the purpose of devising a plan for the expulsion of the Jews for all time to come. Many deputies assembled in Frankfort (Jan. 7, 1516) in response to the archbishop's invitation, and while they were in sympathy with the program of expulsion, some objection was raised to it, not on the ground of justice and humanity, but because it would prove disadvantageous to some cities. This assembly, however, came to no definite conclusion, and, as was the habit of German councils, decided to meet again (March 8) for a final disposition of the question. To avert the impending danger, the Jews sent a deputation to the emperor to plead their cause with him. Maximilian fortunately remembered that the Jews were all his personal property and that their expulsion would be tantamount to an attack upon his sovereignty. Accordingly, Maximilian promptly addressed a letter to the elector Albert, to the chapter of Mayence, to all the lords temporal and spiritual, and to the cities, in which he expressed his displeasure at their deliberations, and forbade them to reassemble on the appointed day. The Jews of Frankfort and Worms were thus saved for the time being. But the community of

Ratisbon was expelled (Feb., 1519) shortly after Maximilian's death, as a result of the uprising of the workmen and the agitations of the hot-headed Balthasar Hubmaier, the pastor of the cathedral church.

Meanwhile, Reuchlin's trial made slow but noticeable progress. Realizing that the commission would decide in favor of Reuchlin, Hochstraten demanded impetuously that the case be submitted to a council since the question involved was not a legal but a religious one. Pope Leo, who desired to displease neither party, had to acquiesce to this in part, despite his former commands. On the one side, the emperor Maximilian and many German princes urged him to exonerate Reuchlin and to silence the Dominicans; on the other side, the king of France and the youthful Charles, then Duke of Burgundy, the future emperor of Germany and king of Spain, admonished the pope in almost threatening words to prosecute the case with more vigor and to condemn Reuchlin's book. Pope Leo therefore thought it expedient to extricate himself from the embarrassing situation, and left its decision in the hands of a commission composed of members of the Lateran Council that was then in session in Rome. In this way the question of the Talmud became the topic of an ecumenical synod, assumed in a measure the importance of a European question, and received wide publicity.

The commission finally decided in Reuchlin's favor (July 2, 1516), but Hochstraten and his friends succeeded in inducing Leo X to withhold his approval of the verdict. This compromise was in perfect keeping with the character of Leo X, who hated excitement and who desired to offend neither the humanists nor the obscurantists, neither the German emperor nor the king of France and the regent of Spain. The trial remained in suspense and could be resumed by the Dominicans at any time if circumstances proved more favorable. Hochstraten, it is true, had to leave Rome in disgrace, but he was a man of strong will, and did not give up the hope of attaining his object in the end.

If Pope Leo believed that his mere word would suffice to put an end to the quarrel, he overestimated the influence of the papacy, and failed to comprehend the vital cause of the dissensions. The minds of men were too much inflamed to be calmed by a word. Both parties desired not peace but war, a war of life and death. When Hochstraten returned from Rome, his life was not safe. Enraged Reuchlinists made frequent attacks upon him and desisted only upon Reuchlin's indignant demand. Ulrich von Hutten, ever since he visited Rome and observed closely the doings of the papacy, became more determined than ever to bring about the fall of the ecclesiastical power in Germany. It was an open secret that a wide schism had occurred in the Church. Not their opponents but the provincial of the Dominican Order, Eberhard von Cleve, and the entire chapter acknowledged in an official communication to the pope that the quarrel had brought down hatred and contempt upon the friars, that they had become a by-word, that they were decried —unjustly, forsooth!—as enemies of brotherly love, peace and concord, that their sermons were despised, their confessions shunned, and that everything they undertook was scorned and construed as arrogance and presumption.

The dispute between Reuchlin and the Dominicans was meanwhile transferred to a different domain, and touched Judaism in a different angle. In reality, it was the cabala that formed the dark background of this movement. Reuchlin believed that the cabala contained the key to a deeper understanding of philosophy and Christianity, and his desire to save the Talmud was prompted by the belief that it contained mystic elements. As he knew but little of this pseudo-science, Reuchlin, impelled by his desire for knowledge, was very eager to master it. When his orthodoxy, probity and scholarship were attacked by his enemies, it became his ambition to be in a position to prove that the cabala and Christianity were in perfect harmony. After a long quest for a guide to the cabala, he accidentally became acquainted with the puerile writings of the Castilian cabalist, Joseph Gikitilla, which the apostate Paul Riccio had recently translated into Latin. With these cabalistic writings as a basis, and in the conviction that the cabala revealed and established the highest knowledge, the mysteries of Christianity, Reuchlin wrote a book on the cabalistic science (de arte cabalistica) and dedicated it to the pope in order to lend additional weight to his contention that the Jewish books deserve to be cherished rather than burned. Reuchlin must have expected to gain the approval of the pope for his efforts to lend new strength to the tottering faith from a different quarter. He hoped that this book would induce Pope Leo X to pronounce final judgment in his favor on the controversy between him and the Dominicans. As a matter of fact, Reuchlin was not alone in his excessive fondness of the mystic teachings. Cardinals, and even the pope, believed that the cabala contained the highest wisdom, and was the basis of Christianity. Hochstraten, however, took issue with Reuchlin on the question of the cabala. He maintained that the cabala was an enemy of Christianity and taught infidelity.

When the interest in the Reuchlin controversy began to lag, a new movement arose in Germany that shook the strong pillars of the papacy and of the Catholic Church to their very foundations—the reformation. The struggle that originally revolved around the Talmud had clarified the atmosphere, and the Reformation found a favorable current of air without which it could neither have come into being nor grown. Martin Luther (1483-1546), the mainstay of this movement that from small beginnings became a historic force within a short time, was of an energetic, vehement, stubborn and impassioned nature that clung tenaciously to its convictions as well as to its errors. The strong-minded Luther was gradually led to the conviction that every individual pope, and the papacy in general, was not infallible, and that the foundation of faith was to be found not in the papal will but in the Scriptures.

The death of the aged emperor Maxmilian (1514) and the election of a new emperor that dragged on for half a year, added a political element to the Reformation, and there ensued a confusion in which the friends and the enemies of the liberal religious tendency could no longer be distinguished. Hutten and the humanists advocated the election of Charles V, in whose principal kingdom, Spain, the Dominicans had the upper hand, and fed the flames of the auto-da-fés with heretics; while the papal court was opposed to him. The cause of Reuchlin and that of Luther, the Talmud and the Reformation, as it were, became intermingled more and more. Matters came to such a pass that the electors who had assembled to elect Maximilian's successor declared themselves firmly in Reuchlin's favor and condemned the intolerant Dominicans of Cologne. The final result was that, instead of condemning the Talmud, Pope Leo encouraged its publication. As a matter of fact, a rich and magnanimous Christian printer of Antwerp, Daniel Bomberg, undertook in the same year to publish a complete edition of the Babylonian

Talmud in twelve folio volumes with commentaries—the model of all subsequent editions (1520-23). Pope Leo safeguarded the interests of the publisher of the Talmud by a protective privilege. The Dominicans sustained a thorough defeat all along the line.

Meanwhile, Martin Luther brought about a complete rupture with the papacy in the imperial diet of Worms, and though the fanatic emperor Charles was inclined to condemn the reformer to the stake, he was led by political considerations to permit Luther to depart in peace. A month later, Charles outlawed Luther, but the latter was already secure and hidden in the fortress of Wartburg, and while Luther, in his retirement, was engaged in translating the Bible into German, his followers in Wittenberg broke all ecclesiastical regulations, changed the service of the churches, abolished masses and priestly ornaments, annulled the vows of the monks and introduced priestly marriages—that is, the priests openly acknowledged their former secret concubines as their wives. The minds of men were prepared for the reformation, and it therefore struck deep root in Northern Germany, Denmark and Sweden, and penetrated eastward into Prussia, Poland and France, and even into Spain, the land of brutalized religiosity and bloody intolerance. Zwingli, the reformer of Switzerland, likewise renounced the papacy after much hesitation, and there, too, a new form of worship was introduced. The marriage of priests was confirmed, pictures and crucifixes were destroyed, and monasteries were abolished. A new order of things ensued; the almighty Rome was powerless against the new spirit. The enthusiasm of the anabaptists began to inflame the minds and bring about a transformation in all the relations of life.

Luther's reformation affected the Jews but slightly at first. The Catholics and the innovators were too much absorbed in their mutual conflicts, especially in Germany, to find leisure for the persecution of the Jews. Luther himself, who already wielded a greater influence than the princes, defended the Jews at first, and branded the manifold accusations against them as lies. In his blunt and earnest manner he declared: "A few very insipid theologians still defend this fury (against the Jews) and prate in their arrogance that the Jews are the slaves of the Christians and are subject to the emperor. Wherefore, tell me, I pray, who would accept our religion, no matter how meek and forbearing he be, when he sees that they (the Jews) are treated by us with so much cruelty and hostility, not only in an un-Christian but even in a bestial manner?" In one of his writings, entitled, "Jesus a Born Jew" (1523), Luther condemns the mistreatment of the Jews still more harshly: "Our fools, the papists, bishops, sophists and monks, have hitherto so dealt with the Jews that a good Christian must needs become a Jew, and were I a Jew and had seen such creatures rule and teach the Christian faith, I would rather become a hog than a Christian. For they have dealt with the Jews as though the latter were dogs and not human beings, and have done nothing but scold them. They are kinsmen, cousins and brothers of our Lord; hence, if one is to glory in flesh and blood, the Jews are more closely related to Christ than we are. I beg you, therefore, my dear papists, when you have had your full of abusing me as a heretic, that you revile me as a Jew." "It is therefore my advice," Luther continues, "that they (the Jews) be treated gently; if we employ force against them and slander them with the lies that they must use Christian blood, that they are malodorous and similar malicious inventions; if we deny them the opportunity of working among us, of trading with us, and of associating with us, and thus force them to engage in usury, how will they come to us? If we desire to help them, we must treat them not in accordance with the papal law, but with that of Christian love, must deal kindly with them, permit them to work and acquire subsance among us, that they may find cause and opportunity to be with us and about us." Such kind words, in which Reuchlin's influence was clearly evident, the Jews had not heard in a thousand years. Some enthusiastic Jews saw in the revolt of the Lutherans against the papacy the fall of Christianity in general, and the triumph of Judaism. Three learned Jews sought to convert Luther to Judaism. Ardent spirits among the Jews regarded the shock sustained by "New Rome" as the precursor of the Messianic era of redemption.

More so than the Jewish people, the Jewish Law profited by the Reformation. Hitherto held in little respect, at the beginning of the Reformation it came into fashion, as it were. Reuchlin had expressed it merely as a modest, pious wish that teachers of Hebrew be appointed in a few German universities for a short time. But as a result of the growing conviction that the Bible remains a sealed book without a knowledge of Hebrew, princes and universities began to search for teachers of Hebrew, and established chairs for its study not only in Germany and Italy, but also in France and in Poland. The charming classic muse, that had lured the hearts of men away from ecclesiastical forms, was neglected more and more, and made way for the serious Hebrew matron. There ensued, as a result, a cordial relation between Jewish masters and Christian disciples, to the chagrin, of course, of the pious extremists of both sides, and some prejudices were thereby removed. The grammarian Elijah Levita, a native of Germany (about 1468-

1549), was the foremost teacher of Christians, and laid the foundation for the knowledge of the Hebrew language among them. The pillage of Padua led him to Venice and Rome, where he made the acquaintance of Cardinal Egidio de Viterbo, who took him into his house and supported him and his family for more than ten years for the purpose of receiving instruction in grammatical and cabalistic studies. Other eminent Christians also sat at Levita's feet, among them George de Selve, bishop of Lavour, and ambassador of France, who was as scholarly as statesmanlike. To the pious rabbis who criticized him for teaching the Torah to Christians, he replied in defense that his Christian disciples were all true friends of the Jews, and seek to promote their welfare. In opposition to the firm belief of that time that the Hebrew vowel-points were of ancient origin, possibly revealed simultaneously with the Law of Sinai, Levita maintained that those points were unknown even in Talmudic times, and were introduced after the close of the Talmud. As a matter of course, this view raised a storm against Levita, and the pious extremists decried it as though such an assertion involved a denial of Judaism. Elijah Levita was therefore unpopular among his coreligionists and moved rather in the circles of Christian scholars, for which he was no less censured by the pious and which involved his descendants in some difficulties.

Contemporaneously with Elijah Levita, Jacob Mantin and Abraham de Balmes also taught Hebrew to Christians. On the whole, a veritable enthusiasm for the Hebrew language seized upon Christendom at that time. In anticipation of a ready sale, printers issued editions of older and more recent Hebrew grammars in several cities of Italy and Germany, even in such places that contained no Jewish community. Everyone was eager to learn Hebrew and to understand the Hebrew literature. A few years before, the representatives of the Church regarded a knowledge of Hebrew either as a luxury or as an evil bordering on heresy; as a result of the Reformation, it achieved the rank of an indispensable branch of divinity. Luther himself studied Hebrew, to be in a position to understand the Bible more thoroughly.

This change of feeling toward the study of Hebrew manifested itself most strikingly in France. The University of Paris, that condemned Reuchlin's "Eye Mirror," in defense of the Talmud and Hebrew studies six years before, now established a chair for Hebrew and a Hebrew printing press; and Guillaume Haquinet Petit, the Dominican father-confessor of King Louis, whose slanders led to the condemnation of Reuchlin's work, now became a patron of Hebrew literature. At his suggestion, King Francis I, who was a patron of knowledge, invited Augustine Justiniani, bishop of Corsica, a man versed in Hebrew literature, to occupy the chair of Hebrew in the University of Paris. A similar invitation was extended by Francis I to Elijah Levita, probably at the suggestion of his admirer, George de Selve—an incident of peculiar significance in its day. For more than a century no Jew was allowed to live or even to sojourn in France, and now a Jew was invited not only to take up his residence there but also to occupy a position of honor, and to impart instruction to Christians. What a change! Elijah Levita, however, declined the invitation; being the only Jew in France, he would not have felt at home there, and he was not the man to take advantage of this incident to bring about the readmission of the Jews into France. Justiniani therefore undertook the task of introducing a knowledge of Hebrew in France, and began to teach Hebrew to the students of the University of Rheims. As there was a scarcity of text-books, Justiniani issued an edition of Moses Kimhi's faulty Hebrew grammar. More remarkable still is the circumstance that in Paris, where, three centuries before, the Jewish fanatics, with the assistance of the Dominicans, had burned Maimonides' "Guide of the Perplexed," a Latin translation of the same work was published by the Dominican Justiniani (1520). As a matter of course, the Christian teachers of Hebrew remained dependent upon their Jewish masters, and there is no doubt that Justiniani received material assistance in his translation from his teacher Jacob Mantin. Elijah Levita, too, expected to see his work on the Masora published in Paris, but was disappointed for some unknown reason. When, therefore, Paulus Fagius, a reformed priest and disciple of Reuchlin, established a Hebrew press in Isny and invited Levita to become its proof-reader, the latter readily accepted the invitation because he was in need and could find no publisher for his Chaldaic and Rabbinic dictionaries. Paul Fagius was very much interested in these works because, to his mind, they contained the key to the cabala which was held in great favor by Christian scholars.

The knowledge of the Bible, so long neglected, also received some impetus as a result of the movement begun by Reuchlin and Luther. The Scriptures, the very foundation of both Judaism and Christianity, had become foreign to the followers of both religions. This glorious memorial of a blessed age had become so obscured by senseless interpretation that its true worth was no longer discernible. Because everyone sought and misinterpreted everything into the Holy Writ, no one found its correct, true meaning. To the Christian laity the Bible had been inaccessible for a long time because the papacy, out of instinctive fear, had prohibited its translation into the vernacular, and the faithful knew only a few fragments or unconnected verses, and even these incorrectly, because they were distorted by a perverted interpretation. Even priests were not thoroughly familiar with the Bible because they knew it only through the medium of the corrupt and perverted vulgata. Luther's translation of the Old and the New Testaments into German during his retirement in Wartburg was therefore a significant achievement. To his contemporaries it seemed as though the divine book had just been revealed for the first time. As already indicated, Luther had to study some Hebrew for that purpose, and to consult Jews on the subject.

The classic antiquity had refined the taste of a small circle; the Hebrew antiquity, on the other hand, rejuvenated the entire generation and imparted to it again the sense for simplicity and artless living. The Bible was soon translated into all European languages, and the Catholics themselves were compelled to disregard the papal interdict and to make it accessible to the nations in their respective languages. The Jews, too, felt the need of a vernacular translation of the Scriptures. Accordingly, the indefatigable Elijah Levita provided a German translation while at Constance, on his return from Isny to Venice; and Duarte de Pinel, a Marano who escaped from Portugal and settled in Ferrara where he returned to his ancestral faith and assumed the name of Abraham Usque, supplied a Spanish translation. The great demand for Hebrew Bibles led Daniel Bomberg to undertake the publication of the Old Testament with the commentaries of Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Kimhi, Gersonides, and others (Mikraot Gedolot). This undertaking met with such success that numerous new editions had to be supplied from time to time.

CHAPTER II

THE ACTIVITY OF THE MARANOS AND THE CABALISTIC-MESSIANIC FANCIES

(1530-1548)

It is astonishing and yet not strange withal that the mighty movement that convulsed the Christian world in the first quarter of the sixteenth century hardly affected the inner life of the Jews. While Christendom experienced a radical change in its mode of thinking, its customs and even in language, and either discarded the old or touched it up to make it look like new, in Jewry things remained as they were. This was due to the circumstance that the Jews had no real period of medievalism, and they therefore needed no renaissance. As their masses were not afflicted with moral corruption and their spiritual leaders with arrogance and greed, they needed no Reformation. This, however, does not mean that within Jewry all was perfection. The inspiring and ennobling ideals of Judaism were covered with a rank growth of ritual laws and practices as a result of the frequent sufferings and the perverted tendencies of the age. The masses lacked religious inwardness, and their leaders clearness of spirit. Formalism and scholasticism were familiar to the Jews, too. There was often an absence of fervor in worship and of probity in commercial life. The ritual of the synagog retained everything that came down from antiquity; was filled, in addition, with unintelligible elements, and possessed on the whole an unsightly character. The sermon was practically unknown in the German communities and their colonies, and the Talmudic discourses delivered by the rabbis were unintelligible to the masses and particularly to the women, and left the hearts cold. The Spanish-Portuguese preachers employed, it is true, the sonorous language of their native country, but their discourses were full of scholastic subtleties, and were no less unintelligible to the laity.

The communities suffered further from a lack of union and coöperation. The fearful persecutions had brought together a large number of Spanish-Portuguese and German refugees in the larger cities of Italy and Turkey. Instead of uniting with the original community, these newcomers formed separate, for the most part petty, communities of their own, maintaining separate communal directories, rituals, rabbis, schools, charitable institutions, and clinging to their peculiar conceits and mutual petty jealousies. In several cities, such as Constantinople, Adrianople, Salonica and others, there were thus not only Italian, Greek, Spanish, Portuguese, German and here and there Mograbian (African) communities, but also as many groups nearly as there were districts or cities in the native land of the refugees. Under such circumstances, nothing that would redound to the general good could be accomplished. The spiritual leaders, though generally moral and sincerely religious, not infrequently submitted to the rich of their communities, and did not courageously oppose their arrogance and their improper conduct.

Even worse than this dismemberment into petty communal groups was the mental exhaustion, the spirit of servility, as it were, that manifested itself not only among the Germans but also among the Sephardic emigrants. Called upon to die for their ancestral faith, they proved themselves great and heroic; otherwise even their great men wasted their activities on petty things. None ventured to explore new paths; even the daily upheavals they witnessed in the Christian world had no effect upon them. Those who still pursued science followed the beaten paths, for the most part. The prevailing tendency was to interpret the ancients, to write commentaries and even commentaries upon commentaries. The Talmudists expounded the Talmud, and the students of philosophy Maimonides' "Guide." The voice of true poetry was hushed; not even a heart-breaking dirge expressive of Israel's ineffable sorrow was heard. The only phenomenon that betrays a change of conditions and of times was the interest displayed in historic reminiscences, and that, for the most part, by the Jews of Sephardic descent. They wished to transmit to posterity the record of the boundless sufferings they had endured. The new sorrows reminded them anew of the ancient sorrows too, and led them to the realization that the history of the Jewish race was a long series of martyrdom. Otherwise, nothing new appeared at this time. Abraham Farissol, Jacob Mantin and Abraham de Balmes, who spread a knowledge of Hebrew among Christians, exerted as little influence upon Jewish circles as the philosophic Elijah Delmedigo, who was by far their superior. The scientific tendency was not popular. Don Isaac Abrabanel, who transmitted the old Jewish-Spanish spirit of his generation found in the philosophic writings of Maimonides some heretical statements that conflicted with Judaism and condemned the critical spirits that ventured beyond the traditional. Joseph Jabez, a Portuguese, and Abraham ben Solomon of Trujillo, a Spanish refugee, regarded the expulsion of the Jews from Spain and Portugal as a divine judgment visited upon Israel because he permitted himself to be led astray by philosophy to the neglect of the Torah.

A noteworthy exception in the midst of this sterility of Jewish thought was the philosophic work of the gifted Leon Abrabanel, or Medigo, the very title of which, "Dialogs of Love" (Dialoghi d'amore), indicates that it is not dealing with the dull, trite philosophy of the day. This scion of the noble family of Abrabanel was the only one of his time to prove the flexibility of the Jewish genius. Torn away from a life of comfort, hurled into a strange land, wandering throughout Italy, his heart torn with anguish at the living death of his first-born, who was wrested from him, Leon Medigo retained mental power enough to accommodate himself to new conditions, to absorb himself in a study of the Italian language and literature, and to reduce to a system the scattered trains of philosophic thought. Hardly ten years after his flight from Spain, he could be regarded as a learned Italian, could vie with the accomplished men of the Medicean age in taste, and could even surpass them in versatility of knowledge. With the same pen with which he wrote a heart-rending admonitory letter in Hebrew verse to his son, who was reared as a Christian in a Portuguese monastery, appealing to him "to remain ever loyal to Judaism, to cultivate the Hebrew language and literature, and to be mindful of the sorrow of his father and the grief of his mother," he wrote also his "Dialogs of Love," depicting the deep love of Philo to Sophia. This seeming romance forms the starting point of Leon Medigo's philosophic system. On the whole, this work is a philosophic idyl rather than a strict system, and contains more fancy than thought, more ingenuity than truth. It is possible that Leon Medigo embodied his deeper thoughts in another work, "The Harmony of Heaven," now lost. The "Dialogs of Love" are altogether foreign to Judaism, and were therefore appreciated by Christians more than by Jews. The Italians were proud of this book, the first philosophic work written in the language which they loved so extravagantly. The "Dialogs of Love" became a favorite book with educated readers, and was translated into Latin and Spanish. The Spanish translation was dedicated to the tyrannical Philipp II of Spain, the murderer of the Jews.

But Judah Medigo, as a philosophic thinker, stood alone. In Jewry in general the discipline of logic yielded to the vagaries of the cabala. It was in the sixteenth century that the cabala first began to reign in Jewry. Its opponents were either dead or unwilling to wage war upon the tendency of the times that was too inclined toward the mysterious and the strange. Sephardic refugees, Judah Hayat, Baruch of Benevent, Abraham Levi, Meir ben Gabbai, and Ibn-Abi Simra, transplanted the cabala into Italy and Turkey, and gained zealous adherents for it by their extraordinary energy. The predilection of Christian scholars, such as Egidio de Viterbo, Reuchlin, Galatini, and even of a pope for the cabala also reacted upon the Jews. This teaching must contain profound truths, if eminent Christians are seeking it so eagerly! Preachers who believed in the cabala explained its mystic doctrines from the pulpit, something hitherto unheard of. With arrogant presumption the cabalists asserted that they alone were in possession of the Mosaic traditions, and that the Talmud and the rabbis must yield to them. In this way, the mystic doctrine with its dreams and vagaries that hitherto had haunted the brains of only a few adepts, spread among Jewry in general, and put common sense to rout. The rabbis, who were themselves convinced of the divinity of the cabala, offered but feeble resistance to its encroachments upon religious rites and the religious life in general. It was inevitable that the inane cabala should create an enthusiasm in shallow minds. With the mystic followers of the Zohar, as was the case with the Essenes of old, the Messianic hope was the pivot around which their entire teaching revolved. To hasten the Messianic kingdom and to predict its coming by juggling with letters and numbers were their main objects. Isaac Abrabanel, though not much given to the cabala, encouraged these Messianic vagaries in order to counteract the hopelessness and despair that settled upon many Spanish and Portuguese Jews in consequence of their ineffable suffering. With this object in view, Isaac Abrabanel wrote three books calculated to prove to his own satisfaction from the Book of Daniel and from haggadic passages that the Messianic era must necessarily begin in the year 5263 of the creation (1503) and reach its consummation with the fall of Rome, about twenty-eight years later.

This Messianic calculation announced with such positiveness by a discreet and highly respected personality, together with other cabalistic dreams, seems to have stirred a German enthusiast to announce the immediate approach of the Messianic era. Asher Lämlein (or Lämlin) proclaimed himself in Istria near Venice as the precursor of the Messiah (1502), and announced that the Messiah would beyond peradventure appear within half a year if the Jews were to hasten his coming by penance, penitence, contrition and charity. As their sufferings and the cabalistic fancies had made the Jewish mind susceptible to such spasmodic expectations, Asher Lämlein found many adherents in Italy and Spain. People fasted much, prayed much and gave alms liberally. That year was styled the "Year of Repentance." The clear-headed and circumspect dared not oppose the general enthusiasm. It is said that even Christians believed in Asher Lämlein's Messianic prophecy. But the prophet died or perished suddenly, and the fraud thus came to an end. Many of his dupes embraced Christianity in their disappointment. Isaac Abrabanel, who lived to see the failure of Lämlein's movement, was no doubt ashamed of his Messianic calculations, and did not indulge in such attempts in his subsequent writings.

But Lämlein's failure did not extinguish the Messianic hope in the heart of the Jews. This hope became a necessity, and enabled them to endure their misery. The cabalists therefore did not cease exciting this hope anew and promising its miraculous realization. Three decades later there set in a Messianic movement of much significance, because of its extent and the men who participated in it. The Maranos of Spain and Portugal played the leading role in this episode.

These most wretched of wretches who renounced their ancestral faith and thus estranged themselves from their very selves, as it were, who had to practice even more scrupulously than other the rites of the Church which they despised in their heart of hearts, and who were, in addition, exposed to the dangers of the inquisition and to the hatred of the Christian population because of their descent, these wretches literally led a hellish existence. Under Deza, the second Spanish inquisitor-general, the horrors perpetrated almost surpassed in cruelty those committed under Torquemada. Deza and his assistants, particularly Diego Rodriguez Lucero, a pious hangman of Cordova, committed so many atrocities that a pious monk, Pedro Martyr, exclaims: "The archbishop of Seville (Deza), Lucero and Juan de la Fuente have dishonored all these provinces. Their creatures know neither God nor justice; kill, steal and violate women and girls to the disgrace of religion." Lucero, a veritable cannibal, counted his victims by the thousands, was been in the habit of calling out: "Give me Jews that I may burn them." The hangmen of the inquisition were constantly busy. This gave rise to turbulence in Cordova; the most prominent persons complained of Lucero's doings and demanded his removal from office. Deza, however, was in accord with him, and the dissatisfied element—knights, ladies, priests and nuns—were charged with heresy.

The third inquisitor-general, Ximenes de Cisneros, proceeded with greater moderation against the suspected old Christians, but treated the new Christians of Jewish and Moorish descent as cruelly as his predecessors. It was this inquisitor who intimidated Charles V when he was about to permit the Spanish Maranos to return to Judaism in consideration of 800,000 gold crowns, and admonished him not to tolerate the Jews in his empire. His successors were no less orthodox—that is, no less inhuman—and the Lutheran movement in Germany that found an echo in Spain too supplied them with new victims in addition to the Maranos. The emperor whom the Reformation had caused a good deal of trouble in Germany ordered the inquisition to proceed with severity against the followers of Luther in Spain. The bloodthirsty monster easily seized upon his new prey, and Jews, Mohammedans and Lutheran Christians were placed on an equality, as it were. Each auto-da-fé consumed in like manner the martyrs of the three different denominations.

The condition of the Portuguese Maranos was different from that of their brethren of Spain. King Manoel, who had driven the Jews to baptism when they were about to depart from Portugal, had promised them, to allay their despair, that the inquisition would not molest them for a period of twenty years. They were even permitted to possess and to read Hebrew books. The Portuguese Maranos, accordingly, ventured to observe the rites of Judaism with less secrecy than their Spanish brethren. In Lisbon, where the majority of them lived, they had a synagog where they used to assemble in prayer with all the greater devotion since they had to conform outwardly to the rites of the Church, and therefore supplicated God in contrition to pardon them for the sin of idolatry which they were compelled to commit. The adults instructed the children in Bible and Talmud, and inspired them with loyalty to Judaism. Moreover, the Portuguese Maranos were given more latitude to emigrate, and many of them, after disposing of their property, proceeded singly or in groups to Barbary or to Italy and thence to Turkey. Manoel attempted indeed to check the emigration of the Maranos, and issued a decree to the effect that no Christian should negotiate an exchange with Maranos on pain of the confiscation of his property; should buy no real property from them without royal permission, and that no Marano should be permitted to leave the country with his wife and children without the explicit consent of the king. Such a law, however, could easily be circumvented. The Spanish Maranos had every reason for envying their fellow-sufferers of Portugal, and ventured to flee across the border to escape the stakes that were kindled for them. The vindictive Spanish government was naturally loath to see its victims escape, and induced Manoel to issue an edict that no Spaniard should be permitted to set foot upon Portuguese soil without a certificate that he was not accused of heresy.

The condition of the Portuguese Maranos might have been tolerable were it not for the popular hatred directed against them, not so much as adherents of Judaism, but rather as an energetic, industrious, superior class. The antipathy of the Old Christians against them gained in intensity when the New-Christians were granted permission to follow all trades, to farm the church-tithes, to hold any office, both civil or ecclesiastic, and to enter monastic orders. At first this hatred found vent in insulting epithets, such as "Jew, accursed convert" (Judeo, Marrano converso), and Manoel felt called upon to prohibit such designations by a law. A failure of crops that produced a famine in Portugal for several years, accompanied by a pestilence, added fresh fuel to the flame of hatred, for it was the general belief that the baptized Jews speculated in corn, enhanced the price of provisions, and exported grain abroad. A Marano upstart, John Rodrigo Mascarenhas, the farmer-general of all taxes, was especially detested, and this hatred was communicated to the Maranos.

The malicious Dominicans took advantage of this feeling of hostility toward the Maranos to accomplish their destruction. In their sermons they thundered against the godlessness of the Maranos, and contrived miracles to arouse the fanaticism of the people. One day Dominican monks announced that in their church a glowing image of Mary appeared in a mirror placed within a cross, and other astounding miracles. A vast throng flocked to the church to marvel at the miracle. One Dominican embraced this opportunity to arouse the fury of the multitude by an impassioned discourse, and two others paraded the streets of the turbulent capital with crosses in their hands, with the cry of "Heresy! Heresy! Heresy!" A mob of ten thousand murderers, composed of the dregs of the populace and of German, Dutch and French sailors eager for plunder, fell upon the Maranos, slew men, women and children on the streets or in their houses with the utmost barbarity, and dishonored many women and girls. The massacre in Lisbon continued for two days. The peasants imitated the example of the Lisbon mob. The number of slain Maranos is estimated at between two and four thousand.

King Manoel was very indignant at these outrages, inflicted severe punishment upon the ringleaders, and endeavored to protect the Maranos. In one edict (March, 1507) he placed the Maranos on an equality with the Christians and granted them the right of emigration, and in another (1512) he ordered that no legal proceeding be instituted against the Maranos on religious grounds for a further period of sixteen years. But the Christian population remained hostile to and embittered against the Maranos. King Manoel was pursued, as it were, by the curse of his crime against the Jews; he could not overcome its pernicious effect.

Under Manoel's successor, John III (1522-75), the condition of the Portuguese Maranos changed for the worse. This simpleton who brought about the ruin of his country and who was known as a decided enemy of the Maranos while still the Infant, at first respected his father's edicts that granted the Maranos equality and immunity from judicial inquiry into their religious conduct until the expiration of the allotted period. But his favorable consideration was due to the influence of his father's advisers, who, on the one hand, still remembered the cruel means employed by Manoel for the conversion of the Maranos and, on the other hand, fully appreciated that the Maranos were indispensable to the prosperity of Portugal, for they were the wholesale merchants, the bankers, the most skilled artisans, the armorers, the gun founders and practically the only physicians in the country. Gradually, however, as King John came under the pressure of counter influences, his fanatic hatred of the Maranos gained the upper hand. Queen Catherine, a Spanish Infanta, who was a great admirer of her father's inquisition and the bloodthirsty Dominicans who were envious of the power their fellow Dominicans enjoyed in Spain, harassed the king with complaints at the impious attitude of the Maranos toward Christianity, and importuned him to check their infidelity by the introduction of the inquisition. As a consequence, John III ordered an official, Jorge Themudo, to scrutinize the conduct of the Maranos of Lisbon and to report to him. Themudo probably stated the truth when he reported to the king (July, 1524) that some Maranos observed the Sabbath and the Passover, but conformed as little as possible to the Christian rites and ceremonies, did not attend mass and church services, did not go to the confessional, did not ask for extreme unction when on the point of death, buried their dead in virgin soil and not in the church-yards, offered no masses for their dead relatives, and ignored many other Christian practices.

Not content with this report, King John instituted a system of espionage upon the Maranos, and employed for this purpose a Marano, named Henrique Nuñes, who had immigrated from Spain, where he had served under the inquisitor Lucero and who entertained a bitter hatred against the Maranos. This spy, in accordance with the secret instructions he received from the king, ingratiated himself into the confidence of the Maranos by posing as a brother and fellow-sufferer, learned the secrets of the Maranos of Lisbon, Evora and other places, and reported everything he saw and heard in his letters to the king. He informed the king that they had no Catholic prayer-books or sacred images in their houses, did not adorn their trinkets or plates with sacred pictures, and failed to observe Christian customs in other respects; gave the names of the Judaizing Maranos, and made some malicious suggestions for their undoing. In consequence of this information, obtained through treachery, John III determined to introduce the inquisition in his country after the Spanish model, and secretly sent the traitor to Charles V of Spain to obtain his approval, and through him that of the pope for this project. The Maranos, however, got wind of the treachery and of the traitor's secret mission, and determined to put the spy to death. Two Maranos, Diego Vaz and André Diaz, who were, or posed as, Franciscan monks, pursued the traitor, overtook him near the Spanish border, slew him, and found in his possession letters treating of the introduction of the inquisition. The avengers, or murderers, as the orthodox Christians called them, however, were detected, placed under torture to name their accomplices, and hanged. The traitor Nuñes was honored as a martyr, was almost canonized, and received the honorary title of Firme Fé (Firm in Faith). After this incident, it might have been expected that the fanatic king would proceed with still greater zeal in his determination to introduce the inquisition against the Maranos whose names became known to him through Nuñe's list. As a matter of fact, the king did order a thorough investigation into the circumstances connected with Nuñe's murder. Unexpectedly, however, this investigation dragged on slowly, and the king, all of a sudden, abandoned his project of introducing the inquisition. This favorable change of attitude on the part of the feeble, fickle king seems to have been brought about by a bold adventurer who attracted the attention of Europe at that time.

A strange and striking personality, emerging from the far and mysterious East, who was either an impostor or an all-daring enthusiast, and who aimed to play either a Messianic or political role, created at this time a mighty commotion in Jewry which affected the Maranos in the extreme West. David Reubeni, probably an Oriental by descent, who had sojourned a considerable time in Arabia and Nubia, suddenly appeared in Europe in a peculiar role, and, by fact and fiction, awakened unrealizable hopes. He styled himself a descendant of the ancient tribe of Reuben, alleged to exist as an independent nation in Arabia, and a prince and brother of the Jewish king who reigned there, whence he called himself Reubeni. Given to adventures and vagaries, he wandered much in Arabia, Nubia and Egypt, and finally arrived in Italy. He claimed that he was sent by his brother, who had an army of three hundred thousand picked warriors, and by the seventy elders of the land of Chaibar, to the European princes and particularly to the pope to obtain firearms and cannon with which to attack the Mohammedan peoples that prevented the union of the Jewish tribes living on both shores of the Red Sea, and to drive the Turks from the Holy Land.

David Reubeni's person and demeanor, about which there was something strange, mysterious and eccentric, tended to inspire confidence in him. He was swarthy and dwarflike, and his continuous fasting gave him the appearance of a living skeleton; but he possessed courage, dauntlessness and a harshness of nature that precluded all intimacy. He spoke only Hebrew, but in such a corrupt jargon that neither the Jews of Asia nor those of Southern Europe could understand him. Upon his arrival in Rome (Feb., 1524), he rode into the papal court on a white palfrey, accompanied by a servant and an interpreter, and demanded at once an audionce from Cardinal Giulio in the presence of other cardinals. He was received in audience by the pope also and presented his credentials.

Clement VII (occupied the papal throne 1523-1531), an illegitimate member of the house of Medici, was one of the noblest popes—wise, mild and animated by a desire to free Italy from the yoke of the barbarians—that is, the Germans. But his reign happened to fall in a period when Europe was passing through a crisis. On the one hand, the Lutheran Reformation that was daily making gigantic strides threatened to undermine the papacy; and, on the other hand, the power of Charles V, who represented the united empire of Spain, America and Germany, was weighing heavily upon Italy. Clement found himself in an embarrassing dilemma. If he were to fall out with the emperor, the latter would favor the Reformation and threaten to limit the power of the papacy; were he to follow a policy of reconciliation with the emperor, the liberty of Italy would be endangered. To escape from this embarrassment, Clement, like the majority of his contemporaries, took refuge in astrology, in the hope of learning through the constellations what human wisdom could not foresee.

David Reubeni, it seems, presented to this pope the credentials he obtained from Portuguese captains or envoys whom he had possibly met in Arabia or Nubia. The pope submitted these credentials to the Portuguese court, and, upon the report that they were authentic, he treated David Reubeni with the greatest distinction and with all the honors due an ambassador. David rode through the streets of Rome on a mule, with a retinue of ten Jews and over two hundred Christians. The pope, whose undertakings were constantly thwarted by the conflict of complicated circumstances, may have flattered himself that David's proposal would enable him to institute a crusade against Turkey, and by means of an Israelitish army, too, to drive the most dangerous enemy of Christianity from the Holy Land, and thereby regain the supremacy of the papacy. Even the most skeptical among the Jews who did not place too much confidence in David's statements could not shut their eyes to the surprising fact that a Jew was treated with such honors and distinctions by the papal court, and came to the conclusion that David's allegations must contain at least a kernel of truth. Accordingly, many Roman and foreign Jews courted the man who seemed to open a blessed future for them. Benvenida Abrabanela, the wife of the wealthy Samuel Abrabanel, sent him from Naples a considerable sum of money, a costly silken flag embroidered with the ten commandments, besides magnificent vestments. David, however, found it advantageous to the part he was playing to hold aloof from the Jews.

After a year's sojourn in Rome, David Reubeni left the city upon the invitation to visit King John of Portugal, embarked upon a ship with a beautifully embroidered Jewish flag waving at her mast, and arrived in Almeirin, the royal residence in the vicinity of Santarem, accompanied like a prince by numerous attendants, and provided with large sums of money. Here, likewise, he was treated with distinction, and the question of delivering arms and cannon to the Israelitish kingdom of Arabia and Nubia was discussed with him and a plan for its execution was agreed upon.

David Reubeni's appearance in Portugal induced King John to abandon his contemplated persecutions of the Maranos. Their support, capital and advice were indispensable to the success of such a vast enterprise. Moreover, King John felt the impropriety of persecuting the Jews of his own kingdom when he was about to form an alliance with a Jewish king and a Jewish nation, and therefore suddenly abandoned his scheme of introducing the inquisition into Portugal. The fact that a Jew was not only admitted into Portugal but also gained official recognition at court naturally filled the Maranos with astonishment and joy. The hour of redemption after which they had yearned so ardently in their deepest soul had come at last! Unexpected deliverance and salvation had arrived for them. They breathed freely once more. Whether David Reubeni posed as a Messianic precursor or not, the Maranos regarded him as such, and eagerly awaited the day when he was to lead them in glory to the New Jerusalem. They sought his proximity, kissed his hands, and treated him as though he were their king. The alleged tidings of redemption crossed the border into Spain; and the still more wretched Spanish Maranos, who had developed an excitable and erratic temper, abandoned themselves to a veritable riot of joy. Compelled to lead a double life and constantly exposed to the danger of detection, it is small wonder that some of them lost their mental equilibrium. In the district of Herrera, a Marano woman set herself up as a prophetess, fell into trances, saw visions, asserted that she saw Moses and the angels, and promised to lead her fellow-sufferers into the Holy Land. She found many adherents among the Maranos. The inquisition, however, put a stop to this vagary by burning a large number of her followers in Toledo and more than ninety in Cordova.

Messianic hopes—that is, a miraculous redemption—were the atmosphere in which the Maranos had their being. At the news of the arrival in Portugal of an ambassador from a Jewish kingdom, a multitude of Maranos fled to Portugal in order to be near the alleged redeemer. But David Reubeni, who enjoyed the privilege of moving about in Portugal at pleasure, conducted himself, it seems, with great circumspection; he made them no Messianic promises, and did not encourage them to return to Judaism openly. He knew full well that he was standing on the brink of an abyss, and that a single utterance or act on his part to persuade the Maranos to return to their ancestral faith would cost him his life. The Maranos, nevertheless, riveted their eyes upon him as their redeemer; they were excited more than ever, and anxiously awaited the miraculous events that were bound to come.

David Reubeni's appearance and the hopes which he awakened made a particularly deep impression upon a noble, gifted and handsome Marano youth, Diogo Pires (born about 1501, died in 1532), and transformed him into a Messianic dreamer. Pires had acquired considerable learning, understood and spoke Latin, the universal language of that period, had already been advanced to an important office in a high tribunal, and was extremely popular at court. He must, however, have been introduced also to the study of Hebrew and the rabbinic literature from his earliest youth, and one of the Marano teachers must have initiated him into the cabala. When David with his chimerical plans made his appearance in Portugal, Diogo Pires was seized by wild dreams and visions all of which had a Messianic background. He therefore sought David's intimacy in order to learn whether the latter's mission corresponded to his own visionary revelations. It seems, however, that David Reubeni treated him coldly, and remarked to him that his military embassy had nothing to do with Messianic mysticism. But Diogo Pires labored under the delusion that the coldness of the alleged ambassador was due to the fact that he had not yet submitted to the Abrahamic covenant; he therefore performed the dangerous operation on himself, and fell sick as a result of the loss of blood. David was very indignant when Pires informed him of what he had done, for if the king were to learn that a Marano had embraced Judaism by such a decisive act his displeasure would fall not alone upon Pires but also upon David, who would be suspected of having persuaded him to take this step. After his circumcision, Pires, who had assumed the name of Solomon Molcho, was seized by still more fearful visions, due probably to his physical weakness, that revolved constantly about the Maranos and their Messianic redemption. He claimed that a special messenger from heaven (Magid) appeared to him in a dream and commanded him to leave Portugal and to proceed to Turkey. David Reubeni, too, advised him to leave Portugal as speedily as possible, lest his conversion to Judaism be discovered. The emigration of Maranos from Portugal must not have been beset with difficulties at that time. Diogo Pires, or Solomon Molcho, reached Turkey, and sought a Messianic mission and a martyr's death.

The youthful, handsome, enthusiastic cabalist, but recently converted to Judaism, attracted a great deal of attention in Turkey. At first he posed as an envoy of David Reubeni, the report of whose favorable reception at the papal and the Portuguese courts had reached Turkey also and inflamed the minds with Messianic expectations. In Salonica, the cabalistic circle of Joseph Taytasak clung to him and listened eagerly to his dreams and visions. In Adrianople, Pires-Molcho converted to the cabala the matter-of-fact Joseph Caro, who had immigrated thither as a child, and who had hitherto occupied himself solely with Talmudic studies. Frenzy is contagious. Like Molcho, he too was seized by cabalistic fancies, had his mentor-angel (Magid) who revealed to him insipid, mystic biblical interpretations and unveiled the future to him, and firmly believed that, like Molcho, he too would be burned at the stake as an acceptable burnt offering unto the Lord. Molcho's engaging personality, his profound enthusiasm, his romantic career, his surprising knowledge of the cabala though born a Christian, and his ready eloquence, all these attracted to him a multitude of adherents that listened to and placed implicit confidence in his mystic utterances. Aged cabalists besought the youth either to interpret some obscure biblical passage or to predict the future, and upon the urgent solicitation of his friends in Salonica he published an epitome of his cabalistic sermons, in which he announced that the Messianic Era would begin at the close of the year 5300 (A. M. 1540). The sack of Rome (May 5, 1527) confirmed the cabalistic dreamers in their Messianic hopes. Rome, the sin-laden Catholic Babel, was taken by storm by the German (mostly Lutheran) soldiery, and was treated like a hostile city at the command of the Catholic emperor, Charles V. According to the Messianic-apocalyptic mysticism, the fall of Rome was to presage the coming of the Messiah. And Rome had fallen! As a result, the hearts of the Jews of Asia, Turkey, Hungary, Poland and Germany were astir with Messianic hopes that were associated with the name of Solomon Molcho and which he was to bring into realization.

In Spain and in Portugal the Maranos clung still more firmly to the prospects of a Messianic redemption and to David Reubeni, whom they regarded with or without his consent as the precursor of the Messiah. Their illusion lent them such confidence that they embarked upon daring ventures that exposed them to gravest danger. Several Spanish Maranos, condemned to death by the inquisition, marvelously escaped to Portugal (in Campo Mayor), and, strange to say, were not molested. A number of young men among these refugees even dared to organize themselves into an armed band, crossed the border into Badajoz, whence they had escaped, and succeeded in liberating several Marano women who were languishing in the dungeons of the inquisition. This incident, as well as the desecration of an image of Mary with which several Maranos were charged, again led the king to contemplate the introduction of the inquisition into Portugal.

Moreover, the royal favor which David Reubeni enjoyed was of short duration. Received at court with great cordiality at first, and often invited to audiences (the conversation conducted through an Arabic and a Portuguese interpreter), he was given the assurance that Portugal would place at his disposal eight ships and four thousand firearms to enable his brother, the alleged king of Arabia, to vanquish the Arabs and the Turks. Little by little, however, the king came to his senses. Miguel de Silva, who was the Portuguese ambassador to the papal court during David's sojourn in Rome and who had even at that time regarded the alleged Jewish prince as an adventurer, was recalled to Portugal and exerted himself to the utmost to deprive him of the royal favor. Besides, the striking homage which the Maranos paid him publicly aroused suspicion against him. Miguel de Silva, who was commissioned to negotiate with the pope in behalf of the introduction of the inquisition in Portugal, pointed out that the king himself, by the favors he bestowed upon the alleged Jewish prince, was encouraging the Maranos to persist in their infidelity or in their loyalty to Judaism. The circumcision and the flight of Diogo Pires or Solomon Molcho, the royal notary, added to the king's irritation, particularly when it was intimated to him that David had encouraged the youth to embrace Judaism. Thereupon David Reubeni was ordered all of a sudden to leave Portugal within two months. The ship on which he and his retinue embarked was driven on the Spanish coast, and David was cast into a dungeon, and was to be tried before a tribunal of the inquisition. But the emperor Charles V set him at liberty, and he proceeded to the papal domain of Avignon.

The termination of the relations between King John and David removed the cause of the king's leniency to the Maranos. The vacillating king was pressed even more urgently by the queen, the Dominicans and some grandees to introduce the inquisition. Bishop Henrique of Ceuta, a former Franciscan and a fanatic priest, finally turned the scales. In Olivença, a city within his bishopric, five Maranos were suspected of Judaizing, and the bishop, without regular trial, and without regard as to whether or not the inquisition had been approved by the pope and legally introduced by the king, ordered the suspects burned at the stake (about 1530). The people applauded him loudly, and celebrated the event by bull fights. Henrique gloried in his deed, and urged the king to proceed in earnest with the punishment of the heretical Maranos. The king finally yielded, and decided to ask the pope, Clement VII, for the appointment of an inquisitorial commission for Portugal.

There were, however, a few older priests still left who protested vigorously against the introduction of the inquisition, particularly Fernando Coutinho, bishop of Algarvia, and Diogo Pinheiro, bishop of Funchal. Both had witnessed the cruel means employed by King Manoel to force the Jews into baptism, and they could not bring themselves to recognize the latter as full Christians whether for the purpose of punishing them as backsliding heretics or for that of entrusting them with judicial offices or ecclesiastical benefices. Coutinho, who could not sufficiently condemn the false zeal of the younger clergy, reminded the king that Pope Clement VII himself had recently permitted several Maranos to return to Judaism openly within the very city of Rome. This pope, convinced of the injustice meted out to the New-Christians, did in fact, with the consent of the College of Cardinals, give them asylum in Ancona, and permitted them to confess Judaism without molestation. The same privileges were granted them also in Florence and Venice. The papal consistory itself declared that the Portuguese Maranos were to be regarded as Jews. Coutinho therefore held to the opinion that punishment should be inflicted not on the Maranos who were accused of sacrilege but on the witnesses who testified falsely against them. The Maranos should be won over to the true faith only by kindliness and love. King John finally decided to submit the question to the pope who, if he gave his approval to the introduction of the inquisition, would at the same time absolve him from the promise he had made the Maranos. Bras Neto, the Portuguese ambassador to the Roman court, was instructed to procure a papal bull to that effect. But this papal approval, granted to Spain so easily by a mere stroke of the pen, the king of Portugal could procure only after many exertions and struggles, due to the counter-influence of the gentle cabalistic dreamer, Diogo Pires, or Solomon Molcho.

Firmly convinced of his Messianic mission, Solomon Molcho proceeded to Italy from the Orient to proclaim boldly the approaching redemption in the very capital of Christendom. His frenzy bordered on insanity, but his eccentric manner and his attractive personality inspired enthusiasm and confidence. In Ancona, where a community composed of Maranos had been recently established, his apocalyptic sermons in which he spoke of his approaching martyr's death, were received with the utmost enthusiasm. But he also found opponents who feared that his outspokenness might bring tribulations upon Jewry or upon the Maranos. His activities attracted attention. The Duke of Urbino, Francisco della Rovere I, induced him to settle in Pesaro, in the expectation that he would attract wealthy Maranos to him, and the city would thereby gain importance. But he didn't remain in Pesaro long; he was drawn to Rome, where his Messianic role was to begin. Strange to say, he gained the favor of Cardinal Lorenzo Pucci, the Grand Penitentiary, who had, indeed, formerly embraced the cause of Reuchlin and the Talmud against the obscurantists, and had protected the emigrated Maranos, and even Pope Clement VII himself bestowed upon him a sort of mystic sympathy, as it were. This pope, who, like but few of his predecessors, had drained the cup of sorrow to its dregs —he was compelled to crown his mortal enemy, Charles V, as Roman emperor (1530)—was too readily inclined to pay heed to dreams, visions and predictions. He granted Solomon Molcho a safe conduct because he had predicted to him that Rome would suffer from a disastrous inundation, as he had prophesied to Bras Neto, the Portuguese ambassador, charged with procuring the papal sanction to the introduction of the inquisition in Portugal, that Portugal would be visited by an earthquake, and both predictions came true (the former on Oct. 8, 1530; the latter, in Lisbon, Jan. 26, 1531). Molcho was thus revered as a prophet. Bras Neto told him that the king of Portugal would have permitted him to remain in Portugal unmolested had he known that Molcho possessed such prophetic gifts. Under the spell of Solomon Molcho, the pope and the Grand Penitentiary Pucci were decidedly opposed to the introduction of the inquisition in Portugal. Pucci told the ambassador bluntly that the king of Portugal, like the kings of Spain, was concerned more with acquiring the wealth of the Maranos than with saving their souls. It were better for the king to permit them to follow their religion without interference, and to punish only those who had returned to Judaism after accepting Catholicism voluntarily.

Molcho was meanwhile most stubbornly persecuted by his own coreligionists, and particularly by the learned physician and philologist, Jacob Mantin. The latter took the Portuguese ambassador to task, as it were, for permitting a Christian renegade from Portugal, who preached against Christianity, to move about freely in Rome. As the ambassador paid no heed to him, Mantin appealed to the inquisition, brought witnesses from Portugal who testified that Solomon Molcho had formerly lived as a Christian in Portugal, and succeeded in having Molcho summoned before the Congregation. Molcho submitted to the inquisitorial tribunal the safe conduct granted him by the pope, but the judges tore the document from his hands, proceeded with it to the pope, and upbraided him for protecting a scorner of Christianity. Clement replied that he needed Molcho for a secret purpose, and expressed the wish that he be not molested. When the inquisition was about to dismiss the accusation, Mantin preferred new charges against

Molcho, with the result that the Congregation condemned him to death. A stake was kindled, and a large crowd assembled to witness the spectacle. A condemned man, clad in penitential garb, was brought forth and cast into the flames without ceremony, and a judge reported to the pope that the auto-da-fé was held by the death of the criminal. The astonishment of the judges and of the witnesses of the execution must have been great when, a few days later, they met Solomon Molcho alive in the chambers of the pope. The pope is said to have admitted to the disconcerted judges that he had substituted another criminal, in order to save the life of his protégé, while Solomon Molcho remained hidden in the papal chambers, and pledged them to silence. Solomon Molcho was saved, but could no longer tarry in Rome.

After his departure from Rome, and particularly after the death of Cardinal Lorenzo Pucci (Aug., 1531), who befriended Molcho and the Maranos, the attitude toward the latter underwent a change. The pope, yielding to the importunities of Emperor Charles and the Grand Penitentiary Antonio Pucci, his uncle's successor, finally granted to Louis Alfonso, the new Portuguese ambassador, the long sought-for bull for the introduction of the inquisition (issued Dec. 17, 1531), though the cardinals Egidio de Viterbo, Elias Levita's disciple, and Geronimo de Ghinucci protested against it. As though ashamed of his act in thus abandoning his former protégés, he included the Lutherans in his bull, and appointed as inquisitor-general not a fanatic Dominican but a Franciscan, the gentle Diogo de Silva, the king's father-confessor. But it mattered little. Three tribunals were instituted in Lisbon, Evora and Coimbra, and they modeled themselves after the constitution introduced in Spain by Torquemada, and improved—that is, rendered more cruel—by his successor. The lot of the Portuguese Maranos was even worse than that of their Spanish brethren, because they were so hated by the people that even honorable Christians spied upon them out of sheer fanaticism in order to denounce them, whereas in Spain regular spies had to be employed for that purpose.

When the inquisition was about to begin its accursed work, many Maranos naturally thought of emigrating. But flight was rendered next to impossible. The captains of vessels were warned, on pain of death, not to give passage to Maranos, and all Christians were forbidden to buy realty from New-Christians. The Maranos were forbidden to export their belongings abroad, or to issue a bill of exchange. If they made secret preparation to depart under cover of darkness, "fleeing from the land which the venomous serpent (the Inquisition) had touched," they were seized with their wives and children, cast into a gloomy dungeon, and thence led to the stake. But as they had no other choice, since their appeals to justice and humanity fell upon deaf ears, they did not discontinue their attempts at flight, but exercised still greater caution.

Meanwhile, the Maranos who had escaped to Rome bitterly romplained to Pope Clement of the cruelties perpetrated upon them, and charged that the king had procured the papal bull fraudulently and by the misrepresentation of the true facts. Most bitterly of all did they complain at being deprived of the right of emigration to which, since the law recognized them as Christians, they were fully entitled. Clement VII, who apart from that had regretted the issuance of the bull, listened to the complaints. He possibly felt that the Catholic Church was being compromised by the fires of the inquisition that consumed even such who did not and would not belong to the Church, and that such cruelties were supplying the Lutherans with material for hostile attacks upon the Church and with occasion for describing her as bloodthirsty, and thus rendering her odious. Moreover, the pope knew full well that the inquisition was introduced in Portugal solely upon the instigation of Spain and of his arch-enemy, Charles V. Clement was therefore considering the idea of revoking his bull.

At this time Solomon Molcho and David Reubeni resumed their mystic activity, and conceived the fantastic scheme of presenting themselves before the emperor at Ratisbon, where the imperial diet was assembled. With a flying banner on which were embroidered the letters Machbi (initials of the Hebrew verse, "Who is like Thee among the mighty, O Lord?") they journeyed from Bologna through Ferarra and Mantua to Ratisbon, and were received in audience by Emperor Charles. One story has it that they sought to convert the emperor to Judaism. David Reubeni, however, was never so foolhardy, even if Molcho was capable of such an attempt. It is more likely that they asked Charles to permit the Maranos to arm themselves and to join forces with the other tribes of Israel in waging war upon Turkey. The sober Joselin of Rosheim, the solicitor for the Jews of Germany, warned them in vain against forcing themselves in the dangerous proximity of the fanatic emperor. The upshot was that Charles had them both put in chains and carried them with him on his journey to Mantua, where Solomon Molcho was placed on trial before an inquisition summoned by the emperor and condemned to the stake as a renegade and heretic. Molcho was led to the place of execution with a gag in his mouth, for the emperor and the tribunal feared the effect of his eloquence upon the multitude if he were permitted to speak. But when the hangmen were about to cast him into the flames, an imperial messenger arrived, removed his gag, and asked him in the emperor's name if he was willing to repent and to return to the bosom of the Church, in which case he would be pardoned. Molcho replied, as was to be expected, that he had been yearning, as it were, for a martyr's death "as an acceptable burnt offering on the altar of the Lord," and that his only regret was that he had been a Christian in his youth. Let them do with him as they pleased, he hoped that his soul would ascend unto God. Thereupon he was cast into the flames and died valiantly (Nov.-Dec., 1532). David Reubeni was not even vouchsafed the glory of martyrdom. Taken by the emperor to Spain and incarcerated there in a dungeon of the inquisition, he was removed, it is said, by poison. As a Jew, the inquisition had no authority over him. But several Spanish Maranos who had come in contact with him and whose names he divulged, possibly under torture, were burned.

Solomon Molcho fell a victim to his delusions with which he fought against the hard realities of life. The rich gifts with which nature had endowed him—beauty, a glowing imagination, perception and enthusiasm—proved his undoing because they were concentrated upon cabalistic, Messianic whimsicalities. But the enthusiasm for and the faith in Solomon Molcho did not die with his death, and many a tale sprang up about him. In Italy and in Turkey many of his adherents believed that he had miraculously escaped the stake again, as he did once before. Some claimed to have seen him eight days after his alleged execution. Others asserted that he had even visited his bride in Safed. An Italian cabalist, Joseph of Arli, prophesied, on the other hand, that Molcho would soon arise from his grave and avenge himself on his enemies.

By condemning Solomon Molcho to death, Charles V sought to inflict another mortification upon the pope, who had been his protector. Clement, however, seemed to have retaliated by a counter-move. He determined to recall the fateful bull that authorized the introduction of the inquisition into Portugal, or, at least, to paralyze its effects. The Maranos learned of it, and made every possible exertion to win over the papal curia. As soon as they realized that they could no longer count upon Solomon Molcho, their most efficient defender, they sent another agent to Rome to represent their cause. The new representative of the Maranos, Duarte de Paz, was the direct antithesis of Molcho—a matter-of-fact person, deliberate, shrewd, eloquent, daring, familiar with all the diplomatic tricks, possessed a profound knowledge of human nature, and knew how to turn human foibles to his advantage. Duarte de Paz, who represented the cause of the Maranos in Rome for nearly eight years, was himself of Marano descent, and had gained eminence and the confidence of King John III by the services which he rendered the Portuguese court in Africa. Chosen by John III for a secret mission, and honored in advance on the day of his departure by knighthood in the Order of Christ (with the title of Commendadore), he proceeded not to the place designated by the king, but to Rome, to labor there in behalf of the Maranos. But Duarte de Paz indulged in so many complicated intrigues that it can no longer be determined whether he played false to the king or to the Maranos. The Maranos supplied him plentifully with money by means of which he was to gain the favor of the papal court. Pope Clement, convinced of the crying injustice meted out to the Maranos, issued a brief (Oct. 17, 1532), suspending the operations of the inquisition until further notice. Duarte de Paz exerted himself further to procure a general pardon for all accused and imprisoned Maranos.

It seems that the Maranos were not without friends even in the court of John III. The party that favored the introduction of the inquisition sided with Spain and was bent upon uniting the Portuguese crown with that of Spain if King John died without issue, as was probable. On the other hand, the national party that wished to preserve the independence of Portugal seemed to be opposed to the inquisition. Hence, the plots and counterplots that were set in motion for several years with reference to the inquisition Duarte de Paz induced Pope Clement to issue a second brief of extraordinary significance (April 7, 1533), in which the pope maintained that those who had been driven to baptism by force could not be regarded as members of the Church, and it were against all justice and equity to punish them for heresy and apostasy. The children born to the first Maranos do indeed belong to the Church because they were born within the faith; but inasmuch as they were reared by their parents in the Jewish faith, and were taught to follow their example from infancy, it were cruel to punish them for Judaizing in accordance with the existing canonical law; they should be attracted to the Church by kindliness. With this brief, Clement suspended the activity of the Portuguese inquisition, directed that all the accusations against the Maranos be referred to his own tribunal, and granted a general absolution or amnesty for apostasy committed in the past. Those who were languishing in the dungeons of the inquisition were to be restored to liberty, the exiled were to return, and the confiscated property was to be restored to the owners. Clement VII must be given credit for embracing with much firmness the cause of humanity in behalf of the wretched Maranos against the bloodthirsty spirit of the then Christianity, even though he may have been impelled by other and not very pure motives. His sense of justice did not permit him to deliver the Maranos without mercy into the hands of the Portuguese hangmen. Though the question had been thoroughly discussed before, Clement appointed a new commission, consisting of two neutral cardinals—de Cesis and Campeggio, and the Grand Penitentiary Antonio Pucci, Cardinal de Santiquatro, known as a partisan of the Portuguese court, to investigate the matter once more. In consequence of this commission's report, which attested officially to the atrocious cruelties perpetrated by the inquisition upon the Maranos, Clement VII issued, upon his deathbed (July 20, 1534) a brief to the nuncio at the Portuguese court to accomplish the liberation of the incarcerated Maranos, about twelve hundred in number. It seems, however, that Clement's death (Sept. 25, 1534) frustrated his good intentions and the hopes of the imprisoned Maranos.

Under his successor, Paul III Farnese (1534-49), the question of the inquisition again gave rise to innumerable intrigues, and, at first, to the disadvantage of the Maranos. This pope, who belonged to the old school of the worldly minded, diplomatic prelates, and concerned himself with the temporal rather than the spiritual power of the papacy, was particularly well disposed to the Jews, conferred many privileges upon them, and employed as his physician-in-ordinary the learned Jacob Mantin, who dedicated several of his works to him. As soon as he ascended the papal throne, the king of Portugal appealed to him to recall the bulls and the briefs of Clement VII that interfered with the activities of the inquisition. Duarte de Paz, the agent of the Maranos, assisted by Diego Rodriguez Pinto, spared no gold to thwart the designs of the Portuguese court. Duarte de Paz offered the Cardinal Santiquatro, the partisan of Portugal, an annual pension of eight hundred crusados (about $400.00) if he were to use his influence in behalf of the Maranos. The diplomatic and discreet Pope decided at first (Nov. 3, 1534) to withhold Clement's brief from publication, but when he learned that it had already been made public he appointed a commission composed of two cardinals—Ghinucci and Simoneta, the former a decided defender of the Maranos—to investigate the matter anew. In consequence of the commission's report, Paul III emphatically admonished the Portuguese court to pay heed to the bull of absolution issued by Clement VII, and protested particularly against the throwing of the Maranos into inaccessible dungeons, and against the confiscation of their property. But like all the Catholic kings of that time who obeyed the pope in so far as such obedience did not conflict with their interests, John III paid little heed to the papal admonitions. His ambassador even suggested to him to renounce the Roman Church, as the king of England did, if the pope did not accede to his request. A veritable web of intrigues about this matter ensued in Rome and in Portugal. In Lisbon, the court on the one hand and the leaders of the Maranos, Thomé Sarrao and Manuel Mendes on the other, plotted with the papal legate, and in Rome Duarte de Paz and Pinto intrigued against or with the Portuguese ambassador and Cardinal Santiquatro.

Weary of these plots and counterplots, Paul III, with characteristic tenacity of purpose, issued a new and decisive bull (Oct. 2, 1535), which granted absolution to all Maranos and exempted them from all civil and ecclesiastical punishment for apostasy and heresy in so far as they did not incur similar charges in the future. The inquisition in Portugal was thus suspended. The nuncio in Portugal likewise acted with energy, published the bull, and succeeded in inducing the Infant Don Alfonso, who was hostile to the Maranos, to open the dungeons and to set eighteen hundred Maranos at liberty (Dec., 1535).

The Portuguese court, stupefied at first as by a sudden blow, left afterward no stone unturned to get the Maranos in their power and to rob them of their possessions. It even resorted to assassination in order to attain its end. Duarte de Paz was one day attacked in the streets of Rome and seriously wounded (Jan., 1536). All Rome was convinced that the assassins were hired by the Portuguese court. The pope was very indignant at the crime, and placed Duarte de Paz under the best possible medical care, which resulted in his recovery. The Portuguese court finally appealed to the victorious Charles V for assistance in this matter. The emperor had just attained a signal victory over the Mohammedans by the conquest of Tunis, and when he arrived in Rome upon his return as a conquering hero (April, 1536) he demanded from the pope, as a reward for his Christian victories over the Mohammedans, the permission to introduce the inquisition into Portugal. Paul III still persisted in his refusal. To the misfortune of the Maranos, their means for satisfying the greed of the papal court became exhausted. Duarte de Paz had promised large sums of money to the cardinals for their assistance in defeating the inquisition, and, in addition, he had used a part of the money placed at his disposal for his own enrichment. As a result, the interest of the cardinals in the welfare of the Maranos gradually waned, and Paul III, with great reluctance, was finally compelled to yield to the demands of the emperor and to sanction the introduction of the inquisition into Portugal (May 23, 1536). The pope sought to place all sorts of restrictions upon the inquisition which he had been forced to sanction under imperial pressure; but the inquisitorial tribunals which began their bloody work in November of the same year ignored the papal admonition and followed in the footsteps of Torquemada. Paul III went so far as to compel the Maranos to wear a particular badge that was to distinguish them from the Old Christians.

The Maranos, however, did not yet give up hope, but redoubled their efforts to have the bull revoked. The most subtle intrigues were again set in motion in the papal court, and Duarte de Paz again displayed his diplomatic cunning. In a memorial addressed to the pope, the Maranos complained bitterly of the cruel treatment they received at the hands of the inquisition, and threatened to return to Judaism, to renounce Christianity, and to seek shelter among less barbarous nations. In response to this appeal the pope appointed a new commission to examine into the legality of the bull which he had issued under compulsion. This commission was composed of two cardinals—Ghinucci and Jacobacio—who were sympathetic to the Maranos, and the honest but narrow Cardinal Simoneta, the author of the bull. His colleagues succeeded in convincing Simoneta of the iniquity of the inquisition, and the latter begged the pope to undo the evil by revoking the bull. A new nuncio was sent to Portugal, with plenary powers in a measure, to frustrate the acts of the inquisition against the Maranos, to take the latter under his protection, and, particularly, to facilitate their departure from the country. In addition, the pope issued a brief (August, 1537), in which he empowered and even encouraged the faithful to protect the accused Maranos—the very act which was regarded by the Portuguese inquisition as aiding and abetting heresy. The king must have felt rather strange at his helplessness, notwithstanding the fact that he had a bull, a tribunal, a grand inquisitor and associates and all the implements for the slaughter of human beings for the glory of God.

At this juncture, however, an incident occurred that played into the hands of the king and the fanatics. One day (February, 1539) a placard appeared on the door of the cathedral of Lisbon and of other churches, to the effect that the Messiah had not yet come, that Jesus was not the Messiah, and that Christianity was a fraud. All Portugal was naturally indignant at such blasphemy, and a rigid investigation was instituted to discover the author of this outrage. The king offered a reward of 10,000 crusados (ducats) for the apprehension of the blasphemer. But the nuncio, too, offered a reward of 5,000 crusados because he, like many others, suspected in this epsiode a scheme concocted by the enemies of the Maranos to arouse the fanaticism of the king and to embarrass the nuncio. To avert suspicion from themselves, the New-Christians had placards posted on the church doors which read: "I, the author, am neither a Spaniard nor a Portuguese, but an Englishman; and even if you raise the reward to 20,000 crusados you will never learn my name." But the author of the blasphemy, who proved to be a Marano, Emanuel de Costa, was finally apprehended, tortured, and after both of his hands were cut off was burned alive. The Maranos foresaw the evil consequences, and many of them fled. The king did, in fact, seize the opportunity to strengthen the inquisition and to frustrate the efforts of the nuncio. The most violent fanatics were appointed inquisitors, to the great chagrin of the nuncio and the pope, among them a monk by name of John Soares, whom the pope described as "an ignorant but inordinately ambitious monk who was an open enemy of the Holy See, and boasted of it." The dungeons were henceforth filled with accused and suspected Maranos, and human victims, from ten to forty at one time, were fed to the flames without heeding their appeal to the pope.

The contemporary poet, Samuel Usque, thus describes the horrors of the Portuguese inquisition, which he himself experienced as a youth: "Its introduction robbed the Jews of their peace of mind, filled their souls with pain and sorrow, tore them away from the comforts of their homes, and cast them into dark dungeons, where they languished amidst grief and sighs. It (the inquisition) laid its snare for them, and dragged them to the stake; it decreed that they must see their sons killed, their wives burned, their brothers deprived of their lives, their children orphaned, the number of their widows multiplied, the rich reduced to beggary, the mighty brought low, aristocrats changed into highway robbers, and chaste and modest women driven to a life of shame by poverty and destitution. It burned a large number of victims, not singly but by thirties and fifties at a time, and not only did it burn and destroy these victims, but it even taught the Christians to be proud of it and to rejoice at the sight of Jews burning at the stakes, the fagots for which they bring on their backs from a distance and which they set on fire and stir. The forcibly baptized slink about in dread of this savage beast (the inquisition), look fearfully about them on the street lest it seize them. They walk about with uneasy hearts and tremble like leaves. In dread they eat their meals around their tables, and the hour that brings rest to all beings only increases their uneasiness and fear. The joy and festivity of their weddings and births are transformed into sorrow and anxiety. Their every movement is fraught with a thousand misfortunes."

That this description is not exaggerated and is not the product of a poetic imagination is attested to by an official report of a college of cardinals that was appointed to investigate the treatment the Maranos received at the hands of the Portuguese inquisition. The report reads: "A Marano accused of heresy, often by false witnesses, is at once cast into a dark dungeon, where he can see neither heaven nor earth and is not permitted to communicate with his family that they might come to his rescue. Ambiguous testimony is brought forth against him, and the indictment states neither the time nor the place where the alleged crime with which he is charged was committed. Later on, the inquisitors give him an attorney, who frequently, instead of defending him, only hastens his condemnation. If a wretch insisted that he was a loyal Christian and steadily denied the charge against him, he was condemned to the flames and his property confiscated. If he admitted that he had done this or that act unintentionally, he was treated in a similar manner on the pretext that he stubbornly denied his evil intentions. If it happened that one admitted his guilt he was reduced to extreme poverty and was condemned to lifelong imprisonment. And this they style mercy and Christian kindness! Even the one who succeeds in proving his innocence is condemned to pay a fine, that it might not be said that the inquisition had arrested him without ground. The accused who are held in the dungeons are tortured with all sorts of implements of torture to force them to confess. Many of them die in prison, and of those who are set at liberty they and their descendants are disgraced forever."

The more bloody the inquisition became the more desperately did the Portuguese Maranos cling to their last anchor of hope, the pope and their other patrons. They found a new representative and defender who was more honest and more energetic than Duarte de Paz, and the struggle between the Portuguese court and the Holy See broke out afresh. The Portuguese Infant and grand inquisitor, Henrique, sent to Rome (Feb., 1542) a list of sins committed by the Maranos, in order to arouse the pope or his court against them. The Maranos, on their part, denied these allegations in a comprehensive memorial addressed to the pope (1544), in which they recited, by documentary evidence, their tragic fate from the time of King John II and Manoel, who forced Christianity upon them by means of all sorts of misery, to their own day. But their protestations did not achieve their object. The hands of Paul III were tied, and he dared not offend the Portuguese court too much. In order to combat the Protestant heretics and to restore the prestige of the papacy, he recognized the Order of the Jesuits (1540) that was organized for the defense of the Church. He gave his approval to the proposition made by the fanatic, Pietro Caraffa, that an inquisition against heretics be introduced in Rome (1542), for Loyola and Caraffa were the real masters of Rome, while the pope was only their tool. Moreover, the Council of Trent was about to assemble that was to fix norms of faith which were to disarm the Protestants. To accomplish this purpose, Paul III needed fanatic, zealous members, who were to arouse the lukewarm and gain their support. Such council members only Spain and Portugal could supply. In Portugal the Jesuits met with a friendly reception. The pope was thus compelled to treat the Portuguese court with consideration, and to depend upon requests where he was not in a position to command. When the fanatic Bishop Limpo, the representative of the Portuguese king at the Council of Trent, upbraided the pope for refusing to recognize the Portuguese inquisition and for harboring Maranos in Ancona who had openly returned to Judaism, and demanded that the pope introduce the inquisition in his own states, Paul III held his peace.

Another circumstance, too, led Paul III to submit to the Portuguese court. As a result of his victory over the Protestants (April, 1547), Charles V formed the ambition of making himself master of the papacy, and of introducing a ritual that was to be acceptable to the Protestants also. But as this was a declaration of war against the pope, Paul III had to break with the emperor. However, to save himself from isolation and to gain allies against his mighty foe, Paul needed the assistance of Portugal as well as of the other middle states. To conciliate Portugal, he sent there a special commissioner, provided with bulls and briefs, which approved the inquisition in part, but stipulated that it be conducted with greater leniency. First of all, those accused of heresy and apostasy be dismissed for the present, but be held responsible for their conduct in the future. For the first ten years the property of those guilty of apostasy should not be confiscated, but should revert to their heirs. In the matter of restricting the emigration of the Maranos, on which the Portuguese court laid so much stress, the pope yielded to the king.

In consequence of the general absolution which the pope granted to all New-Christians, the dungeons of the inquisition were opened and eighteen hundred Maranos were set at liberty (July, 1548). Immediately after, all Maranos were called together and adjured their Judaizing heresy. Only from this moment were they to be regarded as full

Christians and were to be treated as heretics in case of future transgression. In a brief, the pope admonished the king that even such offenders be treated with leniency by the tribunal, since it was to be expected that sheer habit would lead them to observe Jewish practices for a while. Paul III thus protected the Maranos till his dying day. Nevertheless, the Maranos fell victim to a tragic fate. It was futile to endeavor to make good Christians out of them. But the Portuguese court could not, after all, enjoy the inquisition as much as the Spanish court did. For, despite their confession, the New-Christians were not yet regarded in Portugal as true Christians to whom the inquisition could apply the punishment of heresy in accordance with canonical law. After the death of Paul III (Nov., 1549), Julius III granted the Maranos absolution; and even the succeeding popes, who favored and encouraged reactionary and intolerant tendencies, tolerated the Portuguese inquisition as an accomplished fact rather than as a legal institution. Half a century later, Clement VIII disapproved of the judicial murders of the inquisition for that reason, and again issued a general amnesty for convicted Maranos.

CHAPTER III

THE MARANOS AND THE POPES

The ascending smoke of every new auto-da-fé in Spain and Portugal drove individual or whole groups of Maranos to the far East, to Turkey, beyond the reach of the cross; for even Italy was no longer safe for them, ever since even the better popes, and against their better judgment, had to sanction the inquisition. Turkey therefore formed ever more and more a Jewish world in miniature, with which even the despotic rule of the sultans permitted no interference, much as individuals were exposed to arbitrary treatment. In Turkey, like in Palestine, where their drooping spirit revived under the influence of their prosperity and the constant growth of their numbers, the Jews began to dream of establishing a certain independence, of achieving religious and national unity, and of reducing the Messianic hopes to reality. The appearance of Solomon Molcho, the martyr of Mantua, had left a deep impression. Even after his death there were many people in Safed, the largest community of Palestine, where he had lived for a considerable time and awakened Messianic hopes, who believed in the fulfillment of his prophecies that the Messiah would appear about the year 5300 of the creation (1540). It was, however, the general belief at that time that the Messianic era could not set in all of a sudden, but would be conditioned upon certain preparations on the part of the Jews that would hasten the redemption. Maimonides, the highest authority, had taught that the Messianic era would or must be preceded by the institution of a universally recognized Jewish tribunal or Sanhedrin. It was therefore generally acknowledged that it was necessary to have authorized and ordained Sanhedrial judges in Palestine, such as existed during the Temple and in Talmudic times, and to reintroduce the ordination of judges which had long ago fallen into désuetude. The Turkish government, it was anticipated, would interpose no obstacle. Moreover, the rabbis, who were also judges, had their own civil and even criminal jurisdiction. But the authority of these rabbis, who were appointed by the communities, was based on custom, and had no warrant in Talmudic law. They were obeyed, but they also met with opposition. Uniformity of legislation and of the interpretation of the law was impossible so long as every rabbi acted independently in his community and needed recognize no higher authority. The creation of a religious High Court was therefore exigent; and where, outside of Palestine, could such a tribunal be established? Only the sacred recollections of that land could lend to a rabbinic court the dignity of a Sanhedrin. Only out of Zion could the law come forth, and the word of God only from Jerusalem.

While there were many who had spoken of the necessity of reintroducing the ordination, there was only one who had the energy of carrying it into execution. This man was Jacob Berab, who after much wandering and sojourning in Egypt, Jerusalem and Damascus, finally settled in Safed at an advanced age. A man of wealth and great learning and ingenuity, though peevish and audacious, Berab exerted a great influence, and determined to rally the Messianic expectations around a definite point. While Berab's object was a laudable one on the whole, it was not altogether free from the personal ambition of gaining recognition as the highest authority, as the president of the Palestine Sanhedrin, not only in the Orient but also throughout Jewry. The first step, however, was difficult. Only ordained rabbis could legally ordain others, whereas ordination had been discontinued long ago. Out of this dilemma Berab was rescued by another Maimonidean statement to the effect that the wise men (rabbis) of Palestine had the right, by unanimous consent, to ordain one of their members and he, in turn, could then ordain others. As Safed was then the largest Jewish community in Palestine, containing upward of a thousand families, the Talmudic scholars of that city, since they formed the majority, thus had the authority by unanimous action, even without the consent of their colleagues from other cities, to restore the dignity of the Sanhedrin. The rabbis of Safed, men unknown to fame, stood too much in awe of Berab's genius, Talmudic scholarship and wealth to oppose his plan. Accordingly, the twenty-five rabbis of Safed assembled and conferred upon Berab the dignity of an ordained rabbi and judge. The institution of ordination was thus restored, and the organization of a new Sanhedrin was crystallized (1538), since Jacob Berab had the authority to ordain as many colleagues as he pleased. In a "Letter Concerning Ordination" (Iggeret ha-Semichah), Berab analyzes the legality of this step on Talmudic principles and refutes all possible objections. Talmudists of other Palestinian communities gave their approval successively to this innovation. Jacob Berab and his followers believed that by taking that step they had fulfilled the first condition that would hasten the coming of the Messiah. In fact, the restoration of the ordination, even if it could not bring about the Messianic Era, could have given a mighty impetus to the unification of Judaism. The reëstablishment of the Sanhedrin in the Holy Land would have made a deep impression even in Europe, would have exerted a peculiar charm, and would have attracted a still greater number of immigrants. The wretched condition of the Jews in Italy and in Germany, the persecution of the Maranos in Spain and in Portugal, the passion for the strange and the unusual then prevailing and the mighty longing for the Messianic redemption—all these would have sufficed to attract educated and wealthy Jews from the West to the East. By means of the wealth they would have brought and by virtue of the Sanhedrial authority, a Jewish political commonwealth could have been organized. Jacob Berab would have been well qualified to carry such a great plan into execution. But obstacles arose at once. It was to be expected that the community of Jerusalem and its representatives would feel hurt at being ignored in the consideration of such a momentous act, and would pronounce the entire arrangement null and void. The Holy City was surely entitled to be heard first in such a weighty question that concerned not alone Palestine but all Jewry. Realizing this fact, Jacob Berab hastened to avail himself for the first time of the authority given him by conferring the ordination on the then chief rabbi of the Jerusalem rabbinate, Levi ben Jacob Habib.

Levi ben Jacob Habib was a native of Zamora in Spain and migrated to Portugal. At the time when King Manoel forced the Jews to accept baptism, he, then a mere youth, feigned Christianity, bore a Christian name, and conformed to the Catholic faith with despair in his soul. At the first favorable opportunity, he fled from Portugal to Turkey, and cast aside his Christian mask. He finally settled in Jerusalem, where he became the chief rabbi by virtue of his comprehensive Talmudic erudition, which was, however, rather wide than profound. He labored zealously to promote the material and spiritual welfare of the Holy City, and to restrain the lawlessness with which the community was threatened on the part of the fugitives from many countries who did not willingly submit to law and order. Levi ben Habib was familiar with mathematics, astronomy and calendarography. The relation between him and Jacob Berab who had lived in Jerusalem for some time was not a cordial one.

Levi ben Habib, as chief rabbi of Jerusalem, was now requested to recognize the election of Jacob Berab as the first legally ordained rabbi and judge, and to give his approval to the establishment of a Sanhedrin in Safed. Jerusalem was thus subordinated to Safed, and Ben Habib to Berab. As a matter of fact, Berab acted in violation of all propriety; for he did not even consider it worth his while to seek the consent of the Jerusalem rabbinate before the innovation was accomplished. In his letter to ben Habib, he takes the innovation for granted, appoints Levi ben Habib an ordained judge by virtue of the dignity conferred upon him, and insinuates that any objection on the part of Jerusalem would be futile since the Jerusalem rabbis were in the minority. Levi ben Habib, whose opinion certainly carried weight, was not equal to the great occasion when an important step was to be taken toward the unity of Judaism. He succumbed to his offended vanity and forgot that he himself had formerly spoken in favor of the restoration of the ordination. Ben Habib found it comparatively easy to adduce arguments from Talmudic and Rabbinic laws against the restoration of the ordination and the Sanhedrin. In the confusing diversity of opinion then prevailing, everything could be proven pro and con. Moreover, ill-will and injured vanity were never at a loss for specious arguments to disparage and render suspicious the object of their displeasure. Rabbinic Judaism is so thoroughly practical that it has no room for romantic dreams and sentimentality. Berab and his followers in Safed could not justify the restoration of the ordination merely on the ground that such a step would hasten the Messianic Era because such an argument had no legal support. The fixing of the festival calendar, which was formerly one of the functions of the Sanhedrin, was now superfluous since the calendar had been fixed a thousand years ago. Other cases for which the Talmud required the action of ordained judges, such as the punishment of a man guilty of rape, were of too rare occurrence to justify the necessity of ordination. Berab therefore emphasized one point that was both practical and timely, but far-fetched. Maranos arrived in Palestine who, during the period that they feigned Christianity, had been forced to commit what the Talmud regarded as mortal sins, and who sincerely repented of their sins and sought forgiveness. Berab maintained that such forgiveness could be granted them only upon submitting to the legally prescribed punishment of thirty-nine lashes; but as this punishment could be administered only by a legally ordained tribunal, the necessity for the restoration of ordination was clear. Levi ben Habib could easily refute such an argument, and, in addition, adduced many sophistries against Berab's position.

This violent opposition on the part of Levi ben

Habib which Jacob Berab did not expect because he had credited his opponent either with less courage or with more self-denial, embittered Berab exceedingly, particularly so since it threatened the ruin of the entire enterprise. For how could the Jewry of Asia, Europe and Africa endorse this plan and make it the pivot of a national reorganization, when the leading community of Palestine, Jerusalem, the Holy City, rejected it? Moreover, it fell out at this time that Berab's life was endangered, possibly as a result of a denunciation to the Turkish authorities who were eager to embrace any opportunity to take possession of his property. Berab was compelled to leave Palestine for the time being. To save the restored institution of ordination, Berab ordained four Talmudic scholars, just as in the days of Hadrian, Judah ben Baba did under similar circumstances. These four were selected not from the older but from the younger scholars, one of whom was Joseph Caro, an enthusiastic follower of Solomon Molcho and of his cabalistic Messianic dreams, who was an ardent supporter of Jacob Berab. The preference shown young, docile though also gifted men aroused still greater anger in Jerusalem. In the letters exchanged on this occasion, intended for publication, the two great rabbis of Palestine employed such offensive language that it cannot be excused even on the ground of momentary passion. In reply to the insinuating remark of Levi ben Habib that one who claims the prerogative of ordination must be not only learned but also holy, Berab wrote: "I have never changed my name, and have ever, in want and in despair, walked in the ways of God"—a malicious allusion to Ben Habib's forcible baptism. This hurt the latter to the quick. He admitted that during the forcible baptism in Portugal his name was changed, he was made a Christian, and he was not able to die for his ancestral religion. He excuses himself on the ground of his youth, in the fact that he had remained a Christian less than a year, and expresses the hope that that stain had been washed away by the stream of tears which he had shed and still sheds before God. After this expression of contrition, Ben Habib gives full reign to his violence against Berab, and hurls the coarsest insults at his opponent. Owing to this violent opposition on the part of the chief rabbi of Jerusalem, and to Jacob Berab's death that occurred soon after (January, 1541), the institution of ordination proved abortive. Only Joseph Caro, one of the four men ordained by Berab, still clung to it.

This man, who afterward left such a deep impression upon Jewish history (1488-1575), was expelled from Spain with his parents, as a child, experienced many privations in early life, and, after much wandering, came to Nicopolis in European Turkey. In that city he devoted himself to a usually neglected branch of the Talmud, the Mishna, and mastered it so thoroughly that he knew it by heart. Removing to Adrianople, he was received with honor on account of his astounding Talmudic learning, and established a school in that city. In his thirtieth year, he undertook the gigantic task of annotating Asheri's code, of explaining its sources and of making corrections in it when necessary—a task to which he devoted twenty years of his life (1522-42) and twelve years more (1542-54) to its subsequent revision. In the midst of this prosaic occupation Solomon Molcho appeared on the scene and wrought a change in his life. The young Portuguese enthusiast made an overwhelming impression upon him, initiated him into the mysteries of the cabala, and imparted his Messianic dreams to him. Henceforth, his intellectual activities were divided between the matter-of-fact rabbinic studies and the fanciful cabala. During Molcho's sojourn in Palestine, Caro kept up a correspondence with him, and made preparations to emigrate to the Holy Land. Like Molcho, he anticipated a martyr's death, and, like him, had dreams and visions which he believed to have been prompted by a higher being (Magid). This higher being, however, was not an angel or an imaginary voice, but, queer enough, the personified Mishnah, that visited him and whispered revelations to him at night because he had made it his special study. These visions which appeared before him at certain intervals for nearly forty years he wrote down, for the most part. They were subsequently published in part, and reveal the havoc which the cabala wrought in the minds of its devotees. This higher being, or the Mishnah, imposed the hardest penances upon Caro. If he committed the least fault, if he slept too much, arrived too late at prayers, or neglected the study of the Mishnah in the least, the Mother-Mishnah appeared and rebuked him gently. The revelations made to him are astounding. These prophecies do not partake of deception, but are the result of a highly wrought imagination in an agitated age. Such phenomena occur more frequently in the hot, passionate Orient than in the cold, sober North.

Joseph Caro was so obsessed by the thought that he was destined to a glorious career in Palestine and, as a consequence, to die a martyr in the days preceding the Messianic Era for which Solomon Molcho had paved the way, that he left Adrianople and arrived in Safed in the company of the cabalist, Solomon Alkabez, the author of the famous ode to the Bride Sabbath (Lecha Dodi), which was admitted into the liturgy. A part of Caro's fantastic dream was realized in Safed when he received the ordination from Berab which stamped him as a member of the future Sanhedrin. After Berab's death, he dreamed constantly of his future greatness; he would perpetuate the ordination, would be recognized by the wise men of Palestine and of all Jewry, would become the prince and leader of the Jews of the Turkish empire, and would train the best Talmudic scholars, so that the disciples of his school alone would gain recognition. Everyone would honor him as the sacred Image (Diokna Kadisha), and he would perform miracles. He would, to be sure, die a martyr's death like Molcho, but the resurrection would follow soon and the Messianic kingdom would ensue. All this he expected to achieve by means of a work that was to bring about the unity of Judaism and to create universal admiration for its author. If he should finish his commentary on Jacob Asheri's code, publish and circulate it and with that work as a basis write a comprehensive code of his own, he would and must be acknowledged as the greatest man in Israel, as prince and law-giver. His guardian angel had promised him that even the higher spheres would then exclaim: "Who is the man whom the King of Kings delights in, the highest authority of Palestine, the greatest writer in the Holy Land?" Joseph Caro was thus impelled by piety, fantasy and also a little ambition to compile the last religious code (Shulhan Aruch) for all Jewry, that was to put an end to all doubts, uncertainties and diversity of opinion. But even this uniformity was not to be accomplished. A young rabbi of Cracow, Moses Isserles, wrote glosses to Caro's code and set up opposite decisions.

While the Jews of the Orient were enjoying a certain tranquillity and independence that permitted them to indulge in the building of Messianic air-castles, the Jews of the West were constantly subjected to new persecutions. The old charges that they were a peril to society, that they murdered children and blasphemed Christianity, silenced for a while during the agitation of the Reformation, were raised once more. The redoubled zeal which manifested itself within the Church at this time in order to counteract the ever-growing Lutheran heresy reacted also upon the Jews, and brought them new misfortunes, especially in Catholic countries. The Lutheran and Calvinistic Reformation that penetrated to England and Poland had set many people to think for themselves on the subject of religion and Christianity, and led them to regard as false and erroneous many things which the reformers themselves regarded as essential elements of Christianity. The Bible, which had been translated into most European languages, led the thinking readers to form a conception of religion that deviated from that of the dogmatists of Rome, Wittenberg and Geneva, and to realize the striking incongruity between the unity of God as taught by the prophets and the trinity of the Church Fathers. Moreover, as the Reformation paved the way not only for religion but also for political freedom, for freedom from the yoke of the princes, not a few were struck by the fact that the Old Testament imparted ideals of democracy and condemned the despotism of the tyrants, while evangelical Christianity recognized not the people but only canting believers whom it advised to bend the neck beneath the yoke of the tyrant. The contrast between the Old and the New Testament, the former teaching active virtues alongside of a God-fearing life, the latter glorifying passive virtues alongside of a blind faith, did not escape the eager readers of the Bible. Among the numerous religious sects to which the Reformation gave rise in the first decades, there were several that rejected the trinity, accepted the Jewish conception of the unity of God, and were branded by the dominant sects as Half-Jews. Michael Servetus, an Aragonian, possibly under the influence of Spanish Maranos, wrote a thesis on the "Errors of the Trinity" (de Trinitatis Erroribus) that attracted great attention and gained him many followers. For this crime Calvin had him burned at the stake in Geneva, for the reformers retained the fanatic intolerance of the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, there was formed a sect of believers in the Unity (Unitarians, Anti-trinitarians) that rejected the doctrine of Jesus' identity with God. In England, where Catholicism was overthrown solely through the caprice and passion of Henry VIII, sects were organized that sought to adapt the political system of the Old Testament to English conditions, and that took only Old Testament characters as their pattern. Some sectarians observed the Jewish Sabbath, though in secret, to be sure; others cherished a predilection for Jews as descendants of the patriarchs, as the remnant of the chosen people, as the kinsmen of the great prophets for which alone they deserved the highest respect. Among the innumerable pamphlets that appeared at that time there was one, a dialog between a Jew and a Christian, in which the supports of the Christian dogmas were overthrown by texts out of the Old Testament. In consequence of such phenomena, the Jews became unpopular among the reformers, too. The adherents of the new church encouraged hatred of Jews in a measure in order to avert from themselves the suspicion that their object was to undermine Christianity and to substitute Judaism in its stead. Thus the Jews were hated by both churches, and had to abandon the delusion that the new religion would treat them with sympathy. When the peasants of Southern Germany, Alsace and Franconia, placing too much confidence in the evangelistic liberty proclaimed by Luther, attempted to shake off the yoke of their masters, the few Jews of Germany were placed between two fires. The nobility accused them of inciting and supporting the rebellious peasants with their money, and the peasants charged them with being in alliance with the nobles and the rich. Balthasar Hubmaier, the fanatic priest who improvised the expulsion of the Jews from Ratisbon, was the adviser of the peasant hordes of the Black Forest, and probably the author of the twelve articles which the peasants demanded. His renunciation of Catholicism did not render him more gentle, and as an adherent of the Anabaptists he became even more fanatic. The states of the Rhine district demanded, among other things, that no Jew be permitted to live within their territory.

The Jews of Alsace, where the peasant war was raging, deprived of the protection of the emperor, of the nobility or of the burghers, were saved from impending danger by the courage, shrewdness and self-sacrificing activity of one of their coreligionists. This celebrated man was Joselin (Josselman) Loans of Rosheim (in Alsace; about 1478-1555), a nephew of the private physician of Emperors Frederick and Maximilian, from whom Reuchlin had learned the rudiments of Hebrew. Fully appreciating the talents of his nephew, the imperial physician asked the emperor to recognize Joselin as the representative of the German Jews with the right to intercede in their behalf and to guard the few privileges which the emperor had confirmed. Joselin Rosheim, as he is commonly called, had to take an oath of allegiance to the emperor. The Jewish communities, likewise, acknowledged him as their head, or chief rabbi, and he styled himself, or was so called by many, the "ruler" or "chief" of the Jews. The emperor Charles, too, recognized him as the representative of the Jews, and confirmed the Jewish privileges as a result of his efforts. Whenever a community was threatened by danger, Joselin hastened to the imperial camp or to influential courtiers in order to avert it. He labored indefatigably for the welfare of his coreligionists of Germany. During the Peasants' War, Joselin had the courage to visit the camp of the twelve or fifteen thousand raging insurgents, and obtained from their leaders the assurance that they would not molest the Jews.

The Reformation, like every far-reaching revolution in history, brought great misery in its train, and the Jews were affected by it most keenly.

In Germany hardly a year passed in which the Jews were not subjected to banishment, or pain and annoyance of some sort. Still, times had so changed for the better that massacres were no longer in vogue, but recourse was had to banishments, to driving the Jews into misery. But the charge of child-murder survived in the new age. In the Moravian community of Boesing (near Pressburg) such a charge resulted in the burning of thirty-six Jews and in the imprisonment of all the Jews of Moravia (1529). Joselin, however, succeeded in obtaining from King Ferdinand the release of the imprisoned Jews by submitting to him documents in which popes and emperors had stated that the charge of child-murder deserved no credence. Again, the Jews of the German empire were accused (1530) of acting as spies for the advancing Turks, a charge which was to bring about a general expulsion of the Jews. Joselin again succeeded in convincing Emperor Charles and King Ferdinand of the groundlessness of this accusation. Similar charges were raised in a Silesian community as a result of which the head of the community and two other men were burned.

Luther himself, who at his first appearance had so warmly advocated the cause of the Jews, gradually became their bitter enemy. Luther had deluded himself into believing that, in consequence of the pure faith which he taught, the Jews would embrace his religion in great numbers. Inasmuch, however, as they remained obdurate—that is, loyal to their ancestral faith—his monkish fanaticism was reawakened against them. When the Elector John Frederick the Wise of Saxony was about to banish the Jews from his land on account of the misdeeds of a few Jewish rascals (1537) and to make their exclusion permanent, the indefatigable Joselin strove with his usual zeal to avert the impending blow from his coreligionists. He obtained letters of introduction to Luther from Wolf Capito, a former priest converted by the Reformation, and to the duke from the magistrate of Strassburg. Capito appealed to Luther to intercede for the Jews with the gentleness and love for one's enemy taught by the gospel. Luther, however, refused to receive Joselin, but sent him a curt note to the effect that inasmuch as the Jews had shown their lack of gratitude to him for his former intercessions in their behalf by their refusal to accept Christianity, he must refuse to encourage them further in their error by any act of kindness on his part.

In Naples, which was then under Spanish domination, the ultra-Catholic party labored for some time to introduce the inquisition against the Maranos who sojourned there. When Charles V returned from his African victories, he was prevailed upon to expel the Jews from Naples because their contact with the Maranos tended to encourage the latter to persist in their unbelief. But Donna Benvenida, the noble wife of Samuel Abarbanel, who was highly respected even by the Spaniards, had so fervently pleaded with the emperor to revoke his edict of expulsion, and she was so heartily supported by her youthful friend, the daughter of the viceroy, that Charles couldn't decline their request. Possibly Abrabanel's wealth also proved effective in this connection. But several years later the emperor placed such unbearable restrictions upon the Jews that they left the country. This voluntary departure, however, was changed into an expulsion, and every Jew was threatened with severe punishment who would remain in Naples (1540-41). Many of the banished Jews turned to Turkey, some to Ancona under papal protection, and others to Ferrara under the dominion of Duke Ercole II, who was well disposed toward the Jews. Samuel Abrabanel, whose house was the meeting place for all Jewish and Christian scholars, refusing to take advantage of the exception made in his favor, preferred to share the fate of his unfortunate coreligionists. He settled in Ferrara, where he died ten years later. His noble wife, highly honored by Leonora, the daughter of the viceroy of Naples, who had meanwhile become the Duchess of Tuscany, survived him.

A year later, the Jews of Bohemia were subjected to expulsion in their turn. Conflagrations had broken out in several cities, and particularly in Prague, and Jews as well as shepherds were accused of being hired incendiaries. As a result, the Jews were expelled from Bohemia (Adar, 1542); out of the populous community of Prague, only ten persons or families were permitted to remain in the city. Many of the exiles wandered to Turkey and Poland, the two most tolerant countries of that age. But in the course of the same year, the innocence of those who had been executed on the above charge, and consequently that of the banished Jews, came to light. Nobles therefore interceded for the recall of the Jews, with the result that those who settled in the vicinity of the Bohemian border were permitted to return. For this favor, however, they had to pay an annual tax of 300 schock groschen, and were compelled to wear a yellow cloth rag to distinguish them from the Christians.

During the same period, two influential men, one on the Catholic and one on the Protestant side, raised such a violent agitation against the Jews of Germany that it is miraculous that the latter were not completely annihilated. The immediate cause of this agitation was the disappearance, about the Easter season of a four-year-old Christian boy in the duchy of Neuburg. As was usual in such cases, the Jews were suspected. After Easter the body of the boy was discovered by a dog, and popular prejudice found indications of torture on the child's body. The bishop of Eichstätt thereupon seized several Jews and held them for trial, and requested all the neighboring princes to imprison their Jews too. At the investigation, however, the guilt of the Jews could not be proven. On this occasion, Duke Heinrich of Neuburg zealously embraced the cause of the Jews while the bishop of Eichstätt left no stone unturned to bring about, at least, the expulsion of the Jews. The evangelical preacher Buzer, a friend of Capito's, but also of Luther's, also fulminated against the Jews on this occasion. Probably at the request of the Duke a courageous Lutheran minister, possibly Hosiander, undertook to defend the Jews against the charge of ritual murder. In a pamphlet entitled "Judenbüchlein" (Jewish booklet), the writer boldly exposed the entire mendacity and malice of the ritual murder accusation. The author asserts that he came in frequent contact with the Jews, was thoroughly familiar with their language, laws and customs, and condemns that charge as a crying injustice. It was the wealth and the pure faith of the Jews that gave rise to that accusation. On the one hand, greedy and cruel princes, impoverished noblemen and burghers who were indebted to Jews, used to invent such tales in order to rob the Jews, and, on the other hand, monks or the secular clergy invented and circulated such reports in order to create new saints and to establish new places of pilgrimage. In the long interval since the dispersion of the Jews among the Christians up to three centuries before, nothing was known of ritual murders. These fairy tales appeared only since the monks and priests found it profitable to deal in pilgrimages and miraculous cures. For these priests have feared no one so much as the Jews, because the latter held human devices in contempt and also because they understood the Scriptures better than the priests did. For these reasons the former have ever bitterly persecuted and defamed the latter and rendered them odious. One is therefore justified in supposing that the child-murder of Neuburg, too, was a fabrication of the priests. The author further points to the fact that up to the third century the Christians were decried by the heathens as child-murderers. The confessions of Jews themselves, upon which so much stress was laid in proof of the charges, were made mostly under torture and could not be regarded as evidence.

To counteract the impression made by the "Judenbüchlein" that glorified the Jews, the Bishop of Eichstätt requested his protégé, Doctor John Eck, notorious in the history of the Reformation, to refute the statements contained in that pamphlet, to establish the charge of child-murder and to defame the Jews in general. This lawyer-theologian, who, by his vanity and dipsomania, discredited more than ever the Catholic Church which he wished to defend against the Lutherans, gladly undertook the task of defaming the Jews, and wrote (1541) a reply to the "Judenbüchlein," in which he set himself to prove "the evils which the knavery of the Jews has caused in all German lands and in other kingdoms." He repeated over again the old charges formerly made by renegade Jews, compiled the statements extorted from Jews under torture, particularly the fabricated stories of Trent and Ratisbon, and even had the audacity to assert that the Old Testament itself taught child-murder as a Jewish duty.

Strange as it may seem, Luther, the arch-enemy of Catholicism, was perfectly in harmony with the fanatic and Catholic Doctor Eck in his hatred of the Jews. "Why do the Jews bewail their harsh captivity among us?" he says. "For nearly three centuries we Christians were so tortured and persecuted by them that we might well cry that they had made captives of and killed us Christians. Besides, we do not know to this very day what devil had brought them to our country." (As though the Jews had not lived in some districts, now a part of Germany, long before the Germans themselves.) "We did not import them from Jerusalem; besides, nobody is holding them. The highways are wide open; let them leave Germany; we will gladly contribute to the expense of their journey if we could only get rid of them, for they are a heavy burden on us, like a plague, a pestilence and sheer misfortune." Like Pfefferkorn and Eck, Luther relates with satisfaction the frequent expulsions of the Jews "from France and recently, by the dear Emperor Charles, from Spain (muddled knowledge of history), this year from Bohemia, where they had one of their nests, as well as from Ratisbon, Magdeburg, and other places in my lifetime."

Blind to the heroism of Jewish martyrdom in a most hostile environment and to the lessons of history, Luther repeated only the malicious lies of

Pfefferkorn, whose mendacity and depravity had been so thoroughly exposed by the Humanists. From this arch-enemy of the Jews he copied the assertions that the Talmud and the rabbis had taught that it is permissible to kill Goyim, i.e., Christians, to violate an oath made to them, to steal from and to rob them, and that the Jews were bent only upon the weakening of the Christian religion. It is quite inconceivable that Luther, who had so energetically defended the Jews in the first ardor of his reformatory activities, could stoop to repeating the old, exploded tales of well-poisoning, child-murder, and the employment of human blood. In harmony with his antipode Eck, he too maintained that the Jews were treated too well in Germany, hence their arrogance.

"What, then, is to be done to this depraved, damned people that has become unbearable?" Luther asks; and his answer is as lacking in wisdom as in charity. The reformer suggests that, first of all, the synagogs be reduced to ashes "for the glory of the Lord and Christianity." Then he advises that the Christians destroy the homes of the Jews, and drive them all under one roof or in a stable like the gypsies. All prayer-books, copies of the Talmud and even the Hebrew Bible should be taken from them by force (the same advice suggested by Luther's opponents, the Dominicans); they should be forbidden to pray or to pronounce the name of God on pain of death. The authorities should not permit the Jews to leave the country, but compel them to remain where they are; should confiscate the money owned by Jews, and use it as a fund for the benefit of Jewish converts, and reduce the able-bodied Jews and Jewesses to servitude that they might earn their bread with the sweat of the brow and not consume it in idleness, festivities and luxury. Eck had the impudence to maintain that the

Old Testament itself proved the bloodthirsty character of the Jews, and to assert that the Jews employed the blood of Christian children in the consecration of their priests, in facilitating the travail of their women and in curing diseases; and exclaimed with indignation that "it is a great fault on the part of us Christians that we give the Jews too much freedom, protection and security." Luther, the founder of a new denomination, the combater of outworn prejudices, was no less violent in his hatred of the Jews than the notorious Eck, who had maligned him with similar falsehoods and the same impudence.

With advancing years Luther became very embittered. His obstinacy had done much injury to his own cause, and created a lasting schism in his own camp. His harsh nature gained ever greater predominance over his gentle religiousness and humility. His monkish narrowness could not at all conceive of a religion like Judaism, that laid stress not upon faith but upon laws that tended to civilize and refine humanity, and he flew into a veritable fury when his associates (Karlstadt, Münzer) pointed to that fact in connection, for example, with the jubilee year for the manumission of slaves and bondsmen. And when his attention was called to a book, probably written by a Christian, which, in a dialog, extols Judaism at the expense of Christianity, he could not contain himself. That Judaism should dare compare itself with Christianity! And once Luther set to work on the composition of his violently venomous "The Jews and Their Lies" (1542) that surpassed in malignity even the attacks of Pfefferkorn and Doctor Eck.

Luther remarks in the introduction that he had made up his mind to write neither about nor against the Jews, but when he learned that "the miserable, abominable people" had dared to entice Christians to their own faith he must warn the latter not to be deceived. His evidence in favor of the truth of Christianity as against the denial of the Messiahship of Jesus on the part of the Jews is adduced entirely after the monkish fashion. The fact that for over a thousand years the Christians had robbed, oppressed and massacred them is proof that the Jews are depraved and that the Savior of the world must have already come. His logic is still that of the Medieval Ages. Christians must betray no silly sympathy for the Jews. The emperor and the princes are urged to expel the Jews without ceremony. Realizing that the princes would commit no such folly, Luther admonishes the clergy and the teachers to inspire their respective communities with venomous hatred against the Jews. If he had the Jews in his power, he remarks, he would assemble their leaders and scholars, and, with the threat "of cutting their tongues through the back of their neck, he would convince them that Chritianity taught not one God but three Gods." He further incites the robber barons against the Jews. He had heard that a rich Jew was travelling through Germany with twelve horses. If, therefore, the princes are not willing to bar the roads to him and to his coreligionists, let the knights do so after the Christians learn from his book the depravity of the Jewish people.

Even shortly before his death Luther, in a sermon, urges upon his audience to expel the Jews. "The Jews are," he says, "dangerous to the country; they would gladly kill us all if they could; and they do it, too, by posing as physicians and by administering poison that kills sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly, after a lapse of ten or twenty years. If the Jews refuse conversion, they must not be tolerated among us."

The reformer and regenerator of Germany thus proved a more dangerous enemy of the Jews than the Dominicans, than Hochstraten and Eck, and than the popes who ruled to the middle of the century. The words of those scoundrels who were known as sophists and liars were generally ignored; while Luther's statements were accepted as oracles by the Christians of the new denomination and were afterward executed but too faithfully. Just as the church father Jerome infected the Catholic world with his undisguised hatred of the Jews, Luther infected the Protestant world for many generations to come. As a matter of fact, Protestant circles evinced greater animosity toward the Jews than the Catholic ones. The leaders of Catholicism demanded only that the Jews submit to the canonical laws, and under this condition permitted them to live in Catholic countries. Luther, however, demanded their total expulsion. The popes often admonished the faithful to spare the synagogs; the reformer urged their desecration and destruction. It was reserved for Luther to place the Jews in the category of the gypsies. The reason for this is to be found in the circumstance that the popes, living in the metropolis of the world, had a wider outlook, and did not concern themselves with trivialities, while Luther was a rustic with the corresponding narrowness of the rustic, who lent a ready ear to every gossip against the Jews. Luther therefore is to blame for the circumstances that the Protestant princes soon banished the Jews from their domains. In the Roman Catholic countries only the Dominicans pursued the Jews with their hatred.

This religious hatred pursued the Jews as far as Turkey. This empire had no Roman Catholics or Protestants, but it had Greek Catholic Christians. In the cities of Asia Minor, as well as of Greece, Turks and Greeks lived together. The latter, who still retained their arrogance but could not vent it upon the dominant Turks pursued the Jews with their silent hatred. One day some malicious Greek of Amazia, in Asia Minor, caused the disappearance of a poor Greek whom the Jews used to employ on occasion and whom they supported, and charged several Jews with his murder. The Turkish cadi seized the accused Jews, submitted them to torture, and extracted a confession from them, with the result that the accused were hanged and a prominent Jewish physician, Jacob Abi-Ajub, was burned (about 1545). Several days later, a Jew recognized the missing Greek, elicited from him the manner of his disappearance, and brought him before the cadi. The latter, justly indignant at the malice of the Greek accusers, had them executed. A similar incident happened about the some time in the city of Tokat in the same district, and this time too the lie was exposed. As a result of these occurrences, Moses Hamon, the Jewish physician of Sultan Suleiman, succeeded in obtaining an edict to the effect that all cases in which a Jew in Turkey is charged with the murder of a Christian and similar malicious slanders, should be brought not before the usual courts but before the sultan himself.

Jew-hatred, thus checked in Turkey, raged all the more violently in Christian countries. For a long time the Republic of Genoa tolerated no Jew more than three days in its domain. Gradually, however, fugitives from Spain or Provence were admitted in the little town of Novi, near Genoa, frequented the capital too, and were tacitly tolerated. This small community became involved in the party strife of the patrician families, were banished by the one and readmitted by the other. These Jews were, for the most part, men of intelligence—traders, capitalists and physicians. But here, too, the Dominicans agitated against them and aroused against them the jealousy of the Christian physicians in particular. As a result, the Jews were banished from Genoa (April, 1550) against the will of the doge, Andreas Doria, and heralds proclaimed that henceforth no Jews would be tolerated in the republic. This expulsion is of some significance only in so far as it involved an able Jewish historian whose fate reflects on a small scale the tragic experience of the Jewish people as a whole.

The rise and fall of nations, as well as the vicissitudes of the Jewish people, particularly since the cruel expulsions of the Jews from Spain and the inhuman persecutions of the Maranos, brought the conviction home to several keenly observant Jews that human events are guided not by mere chance but by a higher hand that leads mankind to its appointed destiny through blood and tears. Since the crusades, no century was richer in eventful occurrences than the sixteenth, which witnessed not only the discovery of new lands but the rise of a new spirit impatient to create a new order of things though still held in leash by the inertia of the established order. All these momentous events led several keen-minded Jews to see the finger of God in the apparently chaotic and capricious currents of general and Jewish history. They regarded history as the comforter of that portion of humanity that had been overwhelmed by the waves of onrushing events. And what people was in greater need of solace than the Jewish, the martyr people, that seemed to be born to sorrow and that ever ate its bread in tears? Almost at the same time three gifted Jews began to devote themselves to the study of history: the physician Joseph Cohen, the Talmudist Ibn-Verga, and the poet Solomon Usque. The prophetic spirit that saw in historic events the best means for instruction and uplift came upon them, and they thus proved conclusively by that, even in their humiliating condition, the Jews did not resemble the gypsy tribes that neither appreciated nor had a history; nay, that they stood in some respects even higher than those who had employed sceptre and sword, wheel and club to reduce mankind to bondage.

Preëminent among these as a historian was Joseph ben Joshua Cohen (b. in Avignon 1496; d. 1575), of Spanish descent. At the time of the great expulsion, his father emigrated to Avignon, tarried for a while in Genoa, and was banished from there also. Joseph Cohen studied and practised medicine, and seems to have been employed in the house of Doge Andreas Doria. He was devoted to his coreligionists with all his soul, and exerted himself to the utmost to alleviate their sorrows. At the expulsion from Genoa (1550), the inhabitants of the little town of Voltaggio asked him to settle among them as their physician, and he acceded to their request and spent eighteen years among them. History, however, had a greater attraction for him than medicine, and he was on the lookout for chronicles in order to write a sort of universal history in the form of annals. He began his work with the fall of the Roman empire and the rise of the new states, and delineates the course of history as a struggle between Asia and Europe, between the crescent and the cross, the former represented by the then powerful Turkish empire, the latter by France that produced Charles the Great, the first Christian emperor of the West. In the history of his own time, which he either witnessed himself or obtained by a conscientious investigation of reports, he is an impartial, reliable witness and chronicler. His Hebrew style, modeled after the best historic books of the Bible, renders his presentation uncommonly vivid; and its biblical coloring and dramatic turns lend to his history a peculiar charm and raise it above the level of a matter-of-fact chronicle. The history of the more important Jewish persecutions Joseph Cohen connects with the corresponding periods of his general history. His chief aim was to demonstrate that a just Providence guides the destinies of nations, that force and cunning meet with a just recompense and that the mighty are brought low. Because he felt keenly the agonies of the events he narrated, he gives way frequently to a tone of boundless bitterness.

Different in character is a historic work dating from the same period, the product of three generations—father, son and grandson. Judah ibn Verga, a member of a prominent family that was related to the Abrabanels, at once a cabalist and an astronomer, jotted down a number of occasional notes bearing on the persecution of the Jews in various countries and at different times. Solomon ibn Verga, who witnessed the expulsion from Spain and Portugal, lived for a while as a Marano in Lisbon and finally fled to Turkey, added several narratives to his father's notes. His son, Joseph ibn Verga, a member of the rabbinical college of Adrianople, supplemented the work of his father and grandfather by the addition of several facts bearing on the past and on his own time, and published the constituent parts as a whole under the title of "Judah's Rod" (Shebet Jehudah). This martyrology of the Ibn-Vergas, being the work of three different men, lacks unity and is not even arranged in chronological sequence.

The most original of the three contemporaneous historians was Samuel Usque, who undoubtedly fled from Portugal to escape the fury of the inquisition, and settled in Ferrara with his relatives, Solomon Usque (Duarte Gomez), a merchant and poet who translated Petrarch into Spanish, and Abraham Usque (Duarte Pinel), the author of a

Latin grammar and the publisher of a Spanish translation of the Old Testament (Ferrara, 1550-53). Samuel Usque was a poet of great originality whose muse was not content to stray in foreign fields, but drew its inspiration from the equally glorious and tragic history of Israel. Biblical history with its heroes, kings and men of God, post-exilic history with its changes of heroic exultation and unfortunate defeat, and the history subsequent to the destruction of the Jewish state by the Romans—all the events and the vicissitudes of these three periods were vivid in Usque's mind; and the poet breathes the breath of life in this material with his long elegies and songs of consolation. This work, written in Portuguese, not in verse but in a nobly elevated prose, the poet styled "Consolation for the Tribulations of Israel" (Consolaçao ás tribulaçoens de Israel, completed 1552), and is a dialog between three shepherds—Jacabo (Jacob), Numeo (Nahum) and Zicareo (Zechariah)—the first of whom bewails the tragic fate of Israel since his entrance into history, while the other two pour the balm of consolation into the sorrow-stricken heart of the unhappy shepherd and represent the sorrows of Israel as the necessary preparation for the attainment of a glorious goal.

In thus vividly depicting Israel's past, Samuel Usque's aim was to comfort the Maranos who had sought refuge in Ferrara and elsewhere and who again embraced their ancestral faith, and to point out a glorious future to them. He describes the nation of Israel now as a mourning widow who wrings her hands and weeps day and night over the sorrows of her children that covered a period of thousands of years, and now as a radiant, divinely inspired prophetess whose gaze pierces the darkness, whose eye sees a vision of a glorious future, and whose lips utter words of wisdom and of consolation. Though Samuel Usque was not an accurate historian, no one like him delineated with so much lucidity and vividness the main features of Jewish history from its period of antiquity to his own time, from the first forcible conversion under the Visigothic king Sisebut to the expulsion of the Jews from Spain and Portugal and the introduction of the inquisition in the latter country which he saw with his own eyes. His main argument is that all the sorrows and tribulations which the Jewish people had experienced had been literally foretold by the prophets, and have for their purpose the exaltation of Israel, and even as the prophecies of evil had been fulfilled it is confidently to be expected that the prophecies of comfort would not fail of realization. The dialog closes with the encouraging and comforting words of the prophet Isaiah. There is no doubt that Usque's cheering presentation of Jewish history contributed considerably toward inspiring the Maranos with loyalty to their newly recovered faith even unto death.

Samuel Usque was of the opinion that the tribulations of Israel were about to diminish and that the longed-for morning was about to dispel the darkness of the night. The Church, however, gave him the lie. He yet lived to see a new series of trials in his own immediate neighborhood and the application of a whole system of new persecutions which the historian Joseph Cohen could still include in his annals of Jewish martyrology. These new tribulations were the concomitants of the reaction by which the Catholic Church endeavored to check the progress of the triumphant Reformation. Two men, almost at the same time but independently of each other, revived the power of the tottering Church, and thereby retarded the progress of humanity. The Neapolitan Pietro Caraffa, afterward Pope Paul IV, and the Spaniard Ignatius

Loyola, who began with self-control and ended with the enslavement of the minds and bodies of others, reinvigorated the worm-eaten papacy which both friend and foe expected to totter into ruin, and raised it to a power which was almost greater than in the days of Innocent III and his immediate successors, because it rested not on the slender prop of a visionary faith but upon the solid foundation of energetic conviction that is reckless of consequences. Caraffa and Loyola, the latter the founder of the Society of Jesus which is so powerful to this day, were in earnest about papal authority over the souls of the faithful, with his power to redeem on earth and in heaven, because they themselves believed in it implicitly. Caraffa restored the enfeebled discipline of the Church and even rendered it more severe.

Caraffa introduced into the great Catholic world the same means which Torquemada, Deza and Ximenes de Cisneros had employed in Spain to drive the Jews and Moors into the Church—the stake. All those who deviated even a hair's breadth from the papacy in their religious inclinations were either to recant or be burned. The dishonored Church was to regain its lost prestige by means of merciless force that reasons not and murders all independent thought. In order to crush the spirit of freedom and to reduce the human mind to subjection again, the inquisition regarded it as urgent to keep watch over the press which, in the judgment of Caraffa and his associates, was responsible for the schism and the dissensions in the Church. Only such books were to be printed and read that bore the approval of the pope and his followers. The censorship of books, it is true, had been instituted by earlier popes, but inasmuch as hitherto all ecclesiastical officials were venal, printers had no difficulty in publishing and circulating books and pamphlets that were a menace to the established church. The exciting polemics in the quarrel between Reuchlin and Pfefferkorn, the "Letters of the Obscurantists" (see above), Hutten's attacks on the papacy, Luther's first work against "the Roman-Babylonian whore" —all these fire brands that followed each other in rapid succession and that ignited on all sides the tow-spun tent of the Church, were made possible only by a negligent censorship. Now a change was to take place. Only loyal ecclesiastics were entrusted with the censorship; and these, either out of conviction, or out of selfish interests, exercised their authority without regard to consequences.

The Jews, who had no protection of any kind and who owed their sorry existence only to the inconsistency in the administration of the existing anti-Jewish canonical laws, soon felt the effects of this gloomy Catholic reaction. As soon as the Church seriously began to carry these hostile laws into execution, the existence, or at least the peace, of the Talmud was revived, but not with the luke- of the Jews was endangered. At first, the question warmness of forty years ago. At that time the Dominicans of Cologne never entertained the least hope that the pope would grant the request for the burning of the Talmud, and had to resort to all sorts of tricks in order to influence the emperor alone in their favor. Now a different spirit prevailed. A mere suggestion on the part of malicious renegades that the Talmud was a dangerous book sufficed to bring about its immediate destruction. And such renegades arose indeed with new calumnies against the Talmud.

Elijah Levita, the Hebrew grammarian, who had lived for a long time at the house of Cardinal Egidio de Viterbo and who had taught Hebrew and the rudiments of the cabala to many Christians, had two grandsons who had been reared in a Christian environment from infancy. One of them, Eliano, knew Hebrew thoroughly, and was proofreader and copyist in several Italian cities. His brother, Solomon Romano, had traveled extensively in Germany, Turkey, Palestine and Egypt and was familiar with the Hebrew, Latin, Spanish, Arabic and Turkish languages. Eliano, the elder, embraced Christianity under the name of Vittorio Eliano, became a priest and later a canon. His brother, Solomon Romano, was so indignant at this apostasy that he hastened to Venice in order to induce his brother to return to Judaism. But instead of converting his brother, he was himself converted. A pious Venetian patrician, with the assistance of a Jesuit, succeeded in persuading him to embrace Christianity, and he accepted baptism (1551) under the name of John Baptista, to the great sorrow of his mother, Elijah Levita's daughter, who was yet living. Solomon Romano became a Jesuit, and afterward a writer on ecclesiastical subjects. These grandsons of the grammarian Elijah Levita, with two other converted Jews, Ananel di Foligno and Joseph Moro, following in the footsteps of Nicholas Donin and so many other renegades, appeared before the pope as accusers of the Talmud, and repeated the charges that the Talmudic books contained aspersions on Jesus, the Church, and all Christianity, and prevented the wholesale conversion of the Jews. Julius III, it is true, was by no means strictly pious, and least of all was he a Jew-hater; but the fate of the Talmud depended no longer upon the pope but upon the forum of the inquisition—that is, upon the fanatic Caraffa; and Julius III had to approve and sign the decree which the inquisitor-general submitted to him (Aug. 12, 1553). This was another indication of the vaunted infallibility of the pope;

Leo X had promoted the publication of the Talmud; his third successor ordered its destruction. Thereupon, the inquisition's policemen fell upon the houses of the Roman Jews, confiscated the copies of the Talmud and kindred books, and burned them with malicious intent on the Jewish New Year (Sept. 9) that the Jews might feel all the more keenly the destruction of their sacred books. Similar scenes were enacted throughout Romagna, and in Ferrara, Mantua, Venice, Padua and the island of Candia, which belonged to Venice, where Talmudic copies were destroyed by hundreds and thousands. In their rage, the policemen made no distinction between Talmudic copies and other Hebrew books, but burned every book they laid their hands on, even the Scriptures. The Jews of all Catholic countries were in despair because they were robbed of even such rabbinic writings that contained religious prescriptions and in which Christianity was not even mentioned. They therefore implored the pope to revoke his decree, or to permit them at least the use of their unobjectionable rabbinic writings. Julius III granted the latter request, and issued a bull (May 29, 1552) to the effect that while the Jews are bound on pain of corporal punishment to deliver the copies of the Talmud in their possession, the police have no right to seize other Hebrew books, and to annoy the Jews. Henceforth all Hebrew books had to be submitted for examination before publication, lest they contain a shadow of reflection upon Christianity or Rome. The censors were baptized Jews for the most part, and were thus given an opportunity to annoy their former coreligionists.

After the death of Julius III, the Jews fared still worse. The college of the cardinals was determined to elect to the papacy only a fanatic, preferably a monk. The educated prelates with humanistic inclinations, lovers of the arts and sciences, if such still existed, were held in suspicion. Marcellus II, who occupied the papal throne less than a month and was just enough to protect the Jews of Rome against a new ritual murder charge, was succeeded by the bigoted Theatine monk Caraffa under the name of Paul IV (May, 1555-Aug., 1559). The new pope preserved in his old age the impetuosity and passion of his youth, and shaped his policies accordingly. Caraffa hated the Jews and the Protestants as well as the Spaniards, the most useful tools of ecclesiastic fanaticism, and styled the latter and their fanatic king Philipp II "the corrupt seed of Jews and Moors." Soon after his accession, he issued a bull imposing upon every synagog in the papal states a tax of ten ducats for the support of the house of catechumens, where Jews were instructed in the doctrine of Christianity. Still more inconsiderate was his second anti-Jewish bull (July 12, 1555), in which he ordered the strict execution of all anti-Jewish canonical laws. Jews were not to be addressed by Christian as "Sir," and they were forbidden to own real property; whatever real property they possessed must be disposed of within six months. The worst feature of this bull was that it interdicted Jewish physicians to practise among Christians. These hostile measures were strictly enforced and violators of these provisions were severely punished. In addition, the pope authorized to search Jewish houses for hidden copies of the Talmud, and to seize and destroy them when found. As a result, a number of Jews determined to leave Rome and to seek refuge in more tolerant states, but were attacked and mistreated on the road by a fanatic mob. Those who remained in Rome were subjected by the Theatine pope to petty annoyances. On one occasion, his charge read that the Jews had only made a show of selling their real property, and had drawn up false bills of sale, and many of them were arrested in consequence. Again, the pope announced that those Jews "who did not work for the common welfare" would be expelled within a given time. Asked by the uneasy Jews as to what he meant by "working for the common welfare," his reply was: "You'll find it out in due time." He forced the Jews to perform compulsory labor on the walls of Rome which he wished to strengthen against an attack on the part of the Spaniards, whom he himself had provoked to hostilities. On one occasion, Paul IV, whom the Jews justly styled Haman, in his rabid hatred of the Jews, ordered his nephew to set fire to all Jewish houses at night. The latter, with much reluctance, made ready to execute the papal order, when he was met and persuaded by the prudent Cardinal Alexander Farnese to delay this inhuman deed, in the hope that the pope would come to his senses. The next day the pope did, indeed, recall his order.

It is self-evident that the Maranos in the papal states fared even worse than the Jews at the hands of the fanatic Paul IV. Many Portuguese Jews who had been driven to baptism by force had found an asylum in Ancona, were granted immunity from inquisitorial persecutions by Pope Clement VII, and were permitted to return to Judaism. The two succeeding, fair-minded popes, Paul III and Julius III, confirmed these privileges of the Maranos, convinced as they were that baptism forced upon one by the fist could have no sacramental significance. The greater the fury of the Portuguese inquisition, the greater the number of the Maranos who fled to Italy and settled with whatever of their wealth they could save in Ancona and Ferrara, relying upon the privileges granted by the head of Catholic Christendom. But Paul IV had no regard for promises made by his predecessors and which he himself had tacitly acknowledged for a time, when such promises conflicted with his conception of orthodoxy. Accordingly, he issued a secret order to imprison all the Maranos of Ancona, whose number had by this time grown to several hundred, in the dungeons of the inquisition, to examine into their orthodoxy, and to place their property under attachment meanwhile (Aug., 1555). This was a severe blow to the Maranos, many of whom had lived in Ancona for nearly half a century, and all of whom believed themselves secure in their privileges. Even Maranos who were Turkish subjects and who had come to Ancona, which had grown into a flourishing port as a result of their Levantine trade, only for a short commercial visit were seized and imprisoned and their goods were confiscated. By this act, the rabid pope deprived himself of an important source of revenue just at the moment when he was about to plunge into a costly war with Spain.

Only a few Maranos succeeded in escaping from the clutches of the inquisition, and these were received by Duke Guido Ubaldo of Urbino, and settled in Pesaro, because the duke was then an opponent of the pope and he hoped to divert the Levantine trade from Ancona to Pesaro through the Maranos who had commercial connections with Turkey. Duke Ercole II of Ferrara also offered asylum to the Portuguese and Spanish refugees, and invited them to settle in his domain (December, 1555). Among the refugees who settled in Pesaro was Amatus Lusitanus, who was famous as a physician in his time (1511-1568). As a Marano he bore the name of Joao (John) Rodrigo de Castel-branco, and he seems to have left Portugal as a result of the introduction of the inquisition. He tarried for a longer or shorter period in Antwerp, then the capital of Flanders, and in Ferrara and Rome, but settled permanently in Ancona (about 1549) where he openly adopted the Jewish surname of Habib, Latinized into Amatus Lusitanus. Though he proclaimed himself a Jew publicly, he was invited to the court of Pope Julius III to treat the pontiff in his ailment, and was consulted by sufferers from far and near. Amatus Lusitanus regarded the medical art as a sacred office for the prolongation of human life, and he could sincerely state that his concern was ever only the welfare of humanity, that he never paid attention to fees, never accepted costly gifts, treated the poor gratis, and made no distinction between Jews, Christians and Turks. He imparted his art to many disciples who were much attached to him and whom he regarded as his children. His medical works, some of which were written in his youth, were held in such esteem that they went through several editions in his lifetime. His fame was so great that the King of Poland invited him to become his private physician, but Amatus Lusitanus declined the offer.

Such a benefactor of humanity had to flee like a criminal from Ancona to Pesaro, and to wander on later because he would not perjure himself before the bloody inquisition of Paul IV or expose himself to a martyr's death. More than a hundred Portuguese Maranos who could not escape had to languish in the dungeons of the general inquisition until their doom was announced; those who repented and subscribed to the Catholic confession of faith were to be released, but exiled to the island of Malta with the loss of their civil rights and honors. Sixty Maranos agreed to this hypocrisy; but twenty-four who persisted in their loyalty to the God of Israel, among them an aged woman, Doña Majora, were burned at the stake (1556).

Three poets lamented the martyrdom of these Maranos in sincere, affecting, though not poetic verses. One of these poets was Jacob de Fano of Ferrara; and his dirge aroused the indignation of a cardinal who subsequently was elected pope, because "the Maranos had been justly executed."

A cry of consternation rang out throughout all Jewry at the news of the auto-da-fé of Ancona. The Portuguese Maranos of Turkey were particularly dazed at this calamity that had befallen their comrades, and sought for means to avenge themselves on the insane, heartless pope. The peculiar position of the Jews in this century made such a thought a possibility, and a certain unity within Oriental Jewry could supply the means for a war upon the papacy.

There lived at this time a Jewish woman who was an honor to her sex by virtue of her womanly gentleness, beauty of character and greatness of soul, one of the chosen few whom Providence seems to send into the world from time to time that mankind may not entirely forget that man was created in the image of God. Doña Gracia Mendesia was idolized by her contemporaries. Blessed with great wealth which she utilized for the welfare of others, she enjoyed an influence like a princess, which she was in reality, and ruled over the hearts of hundreds and thousands. But what struggles did she have to endure before she could call herself Gracia (Hannah) publicly! Born in Portugal (about 1510-about 1568) into the Marano family of Benveniste, she married under the Christian name of Beatrice, a rich Marano of the family of Nassi who adopted the name of his godfather Francisco Mendes. Her husband had founded an extensive banking house with branches in Flanders and France. The German emperor and ruler of two continents, Charles V, the king of

France and many other princes borrowed money from the house of Mendes. A younger brother, Diogo Mendes, was the head of the Antwerp branch. Upon her husband's death (before 1530), and when the introduction of the inquisition in Portugal placed her property and her own life and that of her daughter Reyna in peril, she joined her brother-in-law in Antwerp, accompanied by her younger sister and several nephews. On this occasion, she supplied poorer Maranos with the means that enabled them to escape the fires of the inquisition. The money which the Portuguese Maranos had raised to bribe the papal ambassadors and minions in order to thwart the inquisition, was paid through her and her brother-in-law. Antwerp contained many Maranos, and the Mendes family occupied a position of eminence in that city. Beatrice's nephew (the young, handsome and gifted John Miques) associated with the nobility of the capital, and was held in high esteem even by Maria, the wife of the viceroy of the Netherlands, the former queen of Hungary, and sister of Charles V.

But Beatrice Mendesia felt ill-at-ease in Antwerp. The love for her ancestral religion which she had to deny, and her abhorrence of the Catholic faith which was forced upon her made Flanders as repugnant to her as Portugal. She longed for a land wherein she could give free expression to the impulses of her heart, and therefore urged upon her brother-in-law, who was the manager of the banking house, to leave Antwerp with her. Diogo Mendes agreed, but while he was making preparations for departure he died, survived by his wife and daughter, Gracia the younger. From this time on, the noble Mendesia experienced many troublous days. By the will of Diogo Mendes she became the head of the banking establishment, but she could not so easily wind up her vast affairs that she might openly return to Judaism in a more tolerant country. Moreover, the greedy Charles V had cast a longing eye upon the vast fortune of the house of the Mendes. The imperial treasurer raised the charge that Diogo Mendes had practiced Judaism in secret; it possibly became known that he had assisted the opponents of the inquisition by word and deed. An order was issued to sequestrate the property of the house of Mendes, but Mendesia succeeded in averting the danger for the moment by a considerable loan and by bribing the officials. Under such circumstances she could not possibly leave Antwerp for fear that she would arouse suspicions against herself. She was thus compelled to remain two years longer at Antwerp in great anxiety until the imperial loan was paid.

The opportunity finally presented itself that enabled Mendesia to leave Antwerp for Venice. Rumor had it that her nephew, John Miques, had abducted her daughter Reyna, whom many Christian nobles had sought in marriage, and fled with her to Venice. This rumor was possibly circulated on purpose in order to furnish the rich widow with a pretext for proceeding to Venice. This precaution, however, was not successful. After her departure, the emperor Charles V again ordered the sequestration of that portion of her property which she possessed within his domains on the pretext that Mendesia and her sister were secret Jewesses, and Mendesia the Older (as she was called) was again compelled to spend considerable sums of money to avert the blow.

In Venice more serious troubles came upon her through the folly of her younger sister. The latter, as indiscreet and unsettled as her older sister was wise and firm, demanded the surrender of her own and her daughter's share of the estate that she might administer it independently. Doña Mendesia, however, would not and could not agree to that because she had been appointed sole head of the business and the guardian of her minor niece. Thereupon her younger sister took a step that proved to her own disadvantage. She reported to the Venetian authorities that her older sister intended to depart with her vast fortune to Turkey in order to embrace Judaism publicly, while she herself and her daughter wished to remain Christians, and asked them to assist her in obtaining her share of the fortune that she might spend it in Venice as a good Christian. The Venetian authorities who expected to make a good haul out of it at once ordered Doña Mendesia to appear before their tribunal, and had her imprisoned to prevent her flight. In addition, her ill-advised and characterless sister sent an unscrupulous and Jew-hating agent to France to attach the property which the house of Mendes owned in that country. But the agent, dissatisfied with the remuneration he received for his services, denounced the younger sister, too, as a secret Jewess, with the result that the French courtt sequestrated all the property that the house of Mendes owned in France. King Henry II of France took advantage of this charge to relieve himself of the necessity of paying his debt to the firm of Mendes. But the unfortunate Mendesia did not give up her effort to save her fortune, and she was assisted by her nephew John Miques. Either Mendesia herself or her nephew found some way of reaching the Turkish sultan, Suleiman, and of inducing him to embrace their cause. The sultan was informed that the Republic of Venice which existed only by his grace had dared interfere with an immensely wealthy family that was on its way to Turkey, where it intended to settle, and his ire was aroused. His Jewish physician, Moses Hamon, who hoped to bring about a marriage between his son and the rich heiress Reyna, also appealed to the sultan in behalf of the Mendes family. The sultan sent a special envoy to Venice to demand that the Republic release Doña Mendesia and permit her to depart for Turkey with her property without molestation.

Meanwhile Doña Mendesia, in some unknown way, succeeded in escaping to Ferrara under the protection of Duke Ercole d'Este. In Ferrara, where she spent several years (1549-1553), she assumed her Jewish name, devoted herself to deeds of benevolence and kindness, and her wisdom and discretion stood the Italian Maranos in good stead. The poet Samuel Usque who dedicated his work to her, speaks of her with the greatest enthusiasm and veneration. In his dialog, Numeo, the comforter, in enumerating his arguments for Israel's consolation, mentions also the appearance of this noble woman who was to Israel "a mother and an angel and redeemer." Abraham Usque and Yom Tob Etias of Ferrara who published a Spanish translation of the Bible, dedicated some of the sacred books to Doña Gracia. Even the most sober rabbis of that generation sang her praises, and described her virtues as enthusiastically, if not so gracefully, as the poet Samuel Usque.

After Doña Gracia became reconciled with her sister, and provided for all the members of her family, she carried into execution her long cherished desire to settle in the Turkish capital (1553-1555) far removed from the vexations of Christian countries. Her gifted nephew John Miques who was betrothed to her daughter Reyna and who had meanwhile made many journeys in the interest of her business affairs, facilitated her departure and prepared for her a welcome in Constantinople. With shrewd diplomacy which he had learned from his contact with Christian statesmen, he obtained letters of introduction to eminent men of Constantinople from the French ambassador, though there was a tacit war between the Mendes family and the French court, and thus gained a favorable reception at the Porte. In Constantinople John Miques embraced Judaism openly, assumed the name of Joseph Nassi, and married his cousin Reyna. Joseph brought with him to the Turkish capital five hundred Portuguese and Italian Jews, and conducted himself like a prince from the very beginning. His versatility, his knowledge of European affairs and his wealth gave Joseph Nassi an entry into court circles; and Sultan Suleiman held him in high esteem. But his noble mother-in-law remained the head of the house as heretofore, and she lavished her generosity upon the Jewish inhabitants of Constantinople.

When the news reached Constantinople that Pope Paul IV had imprisoned the Maranos of Ancona with the intention of burning them sooner or later, Doña Gracia and Joseph Nassi determined to come to their rescue. First of all, they appealed to Sultan Suleiman to demand from the pope the release of the Turkish Maranos who had been apprehended in Ancona while on a commercial visit, and the sultan acceded to their request. He sent a missive to the pope (March 9, 1556), in which he demanded the immediate release of his subjects who were imprisoned in Ancona, and threatened with reprisals upon the Christian subjects of Turkey in case of refusal. Paul IV reluctantly obeyed this demand, set the Turkish Maranos at liberty, and permitted them to depart without interference. The other Maranos, who had no mighty intercessor, were burned, as narrated above. The Turkish Jews determined to retaliate, and were energetically assisted by Doña Gracia and her son-in-law.

The trade of the Levant was largely controlled by Turkish Jews. They successfully competed with the Venetians, fitted out their own ships and galleys, and made Ancona the emporium of their trade. Hence, when Paul IV began to persecute the Maranos of Ancona, and Duke Guido Ubaldo of Urbino invited the fugitives to settle in Pesaro in the expectation of diverting the Eastern trade to his own port, the community of Pesaro appealed to all Turkish communities that were engaged in the Italian trade to boycott the papal port of Ancona, and to ship their merchandise by way of Pesaro. Upon the first outburst of indignation against the monstrous acts of Paul IV, many Levantine Jews, following the example of the important community of Salonica, agreed to that proposition, and placed a ban on Ancona in order to deprive the pope of the large revenues he had hitherto derived from the Levantine trade. The inhabitants of Ancona saw at once their prosperity decline, complained to the pope that his loyal city would soon become deserted and reduced to a mere village, and asked for assistance. But inasmuch as the punishment of the pope could be made effective only by the united action of all the Jews who were engaged in the Italian trade, and as a considerable time was required to get such unanimous consent, the ban was, for the present, limited to eight months. The Jews of Pesaro who were directly concerned, and the former Maranos who had found refuge in Turkey naturally put forth every effort to obtain concerted action in diverting the Jewish trade from Ancona to Pesaro.

But the resident Jews of Ancona who did not belong to the Maranos, fearing that their own business would be injured by transferring the Levantine trade to Pesaro and that the pope would retaliate by new persecutions against all the Jews of the papal states, protested against the ban placed upon Ancona. In Constantinople, Doña Gracia and Joseph Nassi were decidedly in favor of punishing the pope, and ordered all their agents to ship their firm's merchandise by way of Pesaro, but some opposition developed in the capital on the part of a few merchants whose interests were threatened by the preference given to Pesaro. The matter now rested with the Constantinople rabbinate; a unanimous decision on their part that the port of Ancona be avoided out of consideration for the danger that threatened the Maranos of Pesaro, would have settled the question. But two rabbis were opposed to such a decision, and inasmuch as the Constantinople rabbis could not reach an agreement, Jewish merchants of other Turkish cities took advantage of this lack of unanimity to send their merchandise to the port of Ancona as heretofore. Doña Gracia, who regarded it as her special duty to avenge the Maranos, appealed to Joseph Caro and Moses di Trani, the two rabbis of Safed who enjoyed the highest authority in Oriental Jewry; but the rabbinical ban on Pope Paul IV did not prove effective.

While the rabbis were arguing the question, the blow fell which Doña Gracia and her adherents had feared. Duke Guido Ubaldo, urged on by the pope, and disappointed in his expectation of seeing Pesaro become the centre of the Levantine-Jewish trade, expelled from Pesaro the Maranos whom he had formerly welcomed to that city (March 1, 1558). To his credit be it said that he did not deliver them into the hands of the inquisition, but permitted them to depart on ships which they had chartered, bound for the East for the most part. The papal police lay in wait for them, but they succeeded in escaping with difficulty. Some of them were taken captive and treated as slaves.

The famous physician Amatus Lusitanus, who had tarried for a while in Pesaro and had restored many Christians to life and to health in Ragusa, was also compelled to leave Christian soil; and he wandered to Salonica (1558-59). It seems that this year proved a disastrous one for the Maranos of Ferrara, too, and that the duke Ercole d'Este withdrew his protection from them; for the printing establishment of Abraham Usque was closed that year, and Don Samuel Nassi, a brother of Joseph Nassi, was so annoyed by the duke that it was only as a result of the intervention of the Turkish court that he was permitted to remove to Constantinople. A threatening word on the part of the infidel Sultan carried greater weight with the Christian princes than the voice of justice and humanity.

The nearer Paul IV approached the grave the more rabid grew his hostility to the Jews. At his command, two baptized Jews—Sixtus Senensis and Philip or Joseph Moro—traveled throughout the papal states, and annoyed the Jews by their provoking sermons. The latter forced his way into the synagog of Recanate on the Day of Atonement and placed a crucifix on the ark where the sacred scroll is kept. When the Jews, outraged at this violation of their sanctuary, threw him out, he gathered a raging mob around the synagog and two Jews who had laid hands upon him were cast into chains and flogged by order of the mayor of the city. The Maranos and the Talmud were the particular objects of the pope's hatred. The former he ferreted out in their secret hiding places. Many Spanish and Portuguese Maranos who could not save themselves by flight used to join monastic orders and howl with the wolves as it were, to avoid attack from them. Paul IV, accordingly, ordered that men of Jewish descent be barred from membership in monastic orders.

Greater still were the efforts put forth by Paul IV to destroy the Talmud; in the papal states and in the greater part of Italy not a single copy of the Talmud was to be found, for any possessor of a copy of the Talmud was severely punished. The rabbinic schools were discontinued. Had this condition become general, the Jews of Italy would have sunk into ignorance and stupidity and the accomplishment of the pope's object, their conversion, would thereby have been facilitated. However, a great academy and an asylum for the persecuted Talmud in Northern Italy sprang up in Cremona which belonged to Milan. In that city, with the permission of the governor of Milan, a German Talmudist, Joseph Ottolenghi, opened an academy, taught the Talmud and printed rabbinic books. Hence, every Italian Jew who possessed a copy of the Talmud had it secretly brought to Cremona so that there accumulated in that city a vast collection of Talmudic books which were exported to the Orient, Poland and Germany. The Spaniards who were then at war with Pope Paul IV did not interfere with this meagre religious liberty enjoyed by the Jews when they took possession of the Duchy of Milan. But after the war was over, the pope determined upon the burning of the Jewish books stored in Cremona. The Dominicans, those papal policemen, incited the population in order to bring pressure to bear upon the governor, the Duke of Siesa. Circulars were distributed calling upon the Catholics of Cremona to murder the Jews (April 8, 1559). A few days later, two Dominicans, one of whom was Sixtus Senensis, a baptized Jew, applied to the governor for an order to burn the copies of the Talmud because they contained aspersions upon Jesus and so forth. As the duke declined to accept the statements of the Dominicans without further evidence, two other witnesses appeared against the Talmud, the convert Vittorio Eliano, the son of Elijah Levita's daughter, and a conscienceless German Jew, Josua dei Cantori, who desired to avenge himself on Rabbi Joseph Ottolenghi with whom he had a quarrel. Thereupon the duke ordered the seizure of all copies of the Talmud to be found in Cremona and between ten and twelve thousand copies of the same were burned (April or May, 1559).

The maliicous Vittorio Eliano came near sustaining a serious financial loss through the burning of the Talmud. The Spanish soldiers who were ordered to seize the Jewish books did not distinguish between Talmudic and other Hebrew books, and were about to burn copies of the Zohar, the source book of the Cabala, which had become the pet of the papacy. Ever since the visionary Pico de Mirandola, Reuchlin, Cardinal Egidio de Viterbo and the Franciscan Galatino displayed great enthusiasm for mysticism the most orthodox church fathers and prelates firmly believed that the Cabala contained the mysteries of Christianity, and the ban on the Talmud did not therefore include the Zohar. As a matter of fact, the Zohar was first published in Mantua by Emanuel de Benevent during the reign of Paul IV and with the consent of the inquisition. The Cabala was to be reared on the ruins of the Talmud! Envious of the success of the Mantua edition of the Zohar which sold by the thousands in Italy and throughout the Orient, a Christian publisher, Vicenti Conti, undertook to issue a new edition in Cremona which he promised to be an improvement upon the Mantua edition. The baptized grandson of Elijah Levita, the malicious canon Vittorio Eliano, was interested in this Cremona Zohar, provided it with an introduction and did not hesitate to attach his name to it. While this edition was in press, the Spanish soldiers made a search for Jewish books in Cremona, found two thousand copies of the Zohar and were about to consign them to the flames. This would have involved Vittorio Eliano and his partner in a serious financial loss had not another renegade, the aforementioned Sixtus of Siena who had been ordered by the papal inquisition to assist in the burning of the Talmud, come to his rescue, and ordered the Spanish soldiers to desist. Thus, for the time being, the Talmud was burned and the Zohar spared. The enemies of the Jews felt instinctively that the Zohar with its confusing, bewildering mysticism, would lead its adherents to renounce the existent Judaism sooner or later. Through its publication, the Zohar was revered more and more as a canonical book, and placed on an equal footing with the sacred Scriptures. But the papacy's fondness of the Cabala did not last long; a few years later the Cabalistic writings, too, were included in the index of heretical books which the inquisition consigned to the flames.

The effect of the hostility which Paul IV displayed against the Jews and their books was far-reaching. Baptized Jews usually took advantage of it to instigate new persecutions. Such a renegade, Asher of Udine, preferred charges against Jewish books in Prague, as the others had done in Italy, and the Bohemian authorities confiscated all Jewish books, including prayer-books, and forwarded them to Vienna (1559). In consequence, synagogal precentors had to chant the prayers by heart. A fire that broke out at that time in the Jewish quarter of Prague and reduced many Jewish homes to ashes, was the occasion for a still more emphatic display of the fanatic hatred the Christians entertained against the Jews. Instead of rendering assistance to the unfortunates and attempting to extinguish the flames, the Christians hurled into the raging flames many helpless Jews, including women, and plundered the property of the Jews. To fill the cup of bitterness to overflowing, Ferdinand I elected emperor of Germany, the year before, decided for the second time, and this time in all seriousness, to expel the Jews from Bohemia and Prague. Ferdinand was a kindly man, indeed, and sought to bring about a reconciliation between Catholics and Protestants, but toward the Jews he bore an ineradicable malevolence. It was he who first imposed the pass system upon the few Jews of Austria. Every Austrian Jew who came to Vienna on business was required to report at once to the marshal, to state the nature of his business and how long he desired to remain in the city. The restriction was followed by others, when Ferdinand finally ordered that all the Jews of Lower Austria and Goritz leave within the period terminating with St. John's Day (June 24th) of that year; and though a reprieve of two years was granted the Jews, this order of expulsion was finally executed.

A similar fate was in store for the ancient community of Prague. The occasion for this expulsion cannot be ascertained. The community of Prague bore at that time an evil reputation as mean, conscienceless, turbulent and quarrelsome. At the election of rabbis and communal representatives, such scenes of violence used to ensue that the emperor requested the most eminent rabbis of Germany and Italy to prepare a set of election rules for the guidance of the Prague community. When the Jews were recalled after the expulsion that took place twenty years ago, only the dregs returned to Prague. There is no doubt that the

Christians were very much defrauded by this Jewish riff-raff; but the Christians of the same class were by no means more moral or conscientious. However, such was the view characteristic of the age; Christian society was patient with the shortcomings of its members, but of the Jews it demanded the strictest probity and virtuousness. At any rate, after considerable discussion of the question, for the archdukes were opposed to it, the second expulsion of the Jews from Prague was finally executed (1561). On the road the exiles were attacked by the robber-barons and plundered. However, as was the case after the first expulsion, it seemed that the Christians of Prague or the nobility at least, conceived a yearning for the Jews. Again atempts were made to have them recalled, and the archdukes favored such recall. The emperor Ferdinand, however, declined this request on the ground that he had taken an oath to banish the Jews from Prague and durst not violate his oath. Thereupon a noble Jew of Prague undertook a journey to Rome in order to obtain from Pope Pius IV (Paul IV was already dead) a dispensation that would release the emperor from his oath. This noble man was Mordecai Zemah ben Gerson, a member of the famous Soncini family, whose members had established Jewish printing presses in several cities of Lombardy, in Constantinople, and in Prague. Although he had been grievously mistreated by the Prague community and his innocent daughter, a second Susanna, had been traduced by false witnesses and condemned by cowardly rabbis, he was ready and willing to make a great sacrifice in behalf of the community of Prague. His journey to Rome involved many difficulties, but his efforts were crowned with success. The pope released the emperor from his oath, and the imperial conscience felt relieved. The emperor's son, Maximilian (afterwards emperor), took the Jews of Prague under his special protection. The edict of expulsion was revoked, and the exiles were again given permission to settle in Prague, in several cites of Bohemia and also in Austria. But even under the best emperors, like Maximilian and Rudolf, the hand of the official Catholic Church weighed heavily upon the Jews.

The first consistent representative of the fanatic, intolerant Catholic Church, the pope Paul IV, was dead, and the Romans had cursed his memory and his system. As in the days of the ancient republic, the people gathered at the capitol, marched through the city, set fire to the buildings of the inquisition, mistreated the police and the Dominicans, tore off the papal escutcheon, broke the pope's statue and dragged its head through the tsreets. The Romans looked on with laughter of scorn when a Jew placed upon the pope's statue the yellow cap which this pope had compelled the Jews to wear. But of what profit was it to vent such childish fury upon the dead? The system survived its founder for centuries. The Jesuits and the fanatics had already gained the upper hand in the Catholic Church, and each succeeding pope had willy-nilly to submit to them. Were not the recommendations of the Council of Trent that enslaved the spirit of the Catholics canonized by Pope Pius IV, one of the best Roman high priests?

A deputation of Roman Jews came to pay homage to the newly elected pope, and embraced the opportunity to describe to him in affecting terms the sorrows which his predecessor had inflicted upon them. Pius IV promised them relief, and issued a bull for the Jews of the pontifical states (February 27, 1562) that sounded favorable enough; but these palliative provisions threw all the more glaring a light upon the restrictions that still continued in force. The introduction to the bull is of interest because it displays the hyprocisy of the papal curia: "The laws governing your conduct, issued by my sainted predecessor out of zeal for the cause of religion have, we have been informed, been taken advantage of by some persons who were desirous of possessing themselves of your property to make false accusations against you and to annoy you, and have been interpreted contrary to the intentions of my predecessor. Therefore, in consideration of the fact that the Holy Mother Church had granted and conceded many things to the Jews so that their remnant might be saved, and following the example of our predecessor, we decree"—what, then, are the great favors the pope decrees? That the Jews may discard their badge, the yellow cap, outside the city of Rome, that they may own real property to the value of fifteen hundred ducats, that they may trade in other things outside of old clothes, that they may associate with Christians but must not employ Christian servants. This was practically all that one of the best popes did or could grant them. More important for the Roman Jews was the point that all the indictments for the violation of the harsh laws of Paul IV, including that of refusing to produce Talmudic books, were canceled. The pope was also prevailed upon, for a consideration, to remove the ban on the Talmud. The bull which he issued to this effect (March 24, 1564) states that while the Talmud, like the entire Humanistic literature, like Reuchlin's "Eye Mirror and Cabalistic Writings," is to be condemned, permission to print it is granted if the name Talmud is omitted, and if it be purged of its anti-Christian passages; that is, submitted to censorship before publication. In thus prohibiting the use of the name while granting the thing itself, the pope sought to avoid the all too glaring contrast between his own attitude towards the Talmud and that of his predecessor. Now, there was a prospect, at least, that this literary monument, so indispensable to the Jews, might again come to light, though in a mutilated form. A few years later, the publication of the Talmud was, in fact, undertaken in Basel under the title of "Gemara" or "Sifre ha-Shas."

With the death of Pius IV (1566), the Jews of the papal states were deprived even of the few rights he had granted them. His successor, Pius V (1566-72), who even surpassed his prototype, Paul IV, in cruelty and in the spirit of persecution, hated the Jews no less than the German Protestants, the Swiss Calvinists and the French Huguenots. Three months after his accession (April 19, 1566), he annulled the decrees of his predecessor favorable to the Jews, and revived all the restrictions of Paul IV and laid even greater stress upon them. Jews were again prohibited to associate with Christians, to own real property, to deal in anything outside of old clothes, to have more than one synagog, and the wearing of the Jewish badge was strictly enforced. Moreover, these restrictions applied not alone to the Jews of the papal states but also to those of the entire Catholic world; and at that time, in the period of the Catholic reaction against the Protestants, the papal word carried altogether greater weight than heretofore, and found many executors. And thus there ensued a new period of affliction for the Jews of the Catholic countries.

The historian, Joseph Cohen, found ever new afflictions to chronicle in his "Annals of Persecutions," ever fresh tears to gather in the "Valley of Weeping" (Emek ha-Bacha) which he began in his old age. The bloodthirsty Pius V frequently supplied him with material. At his instigation, many Jews of the papal state were imprisoned and their books seized and burned on the pretext that they had violated some of the canonical laws which he had issued. The prosperous community of Bologna, in particular, was harrassed by the pope who had designs upon their property. To accomplish this robbery under a legal guise, an inquisitorial tribunal laid before them certain captious questions, compiled by a baptized Jew named Alessandro, such as whether the Jews regarded the Catholics as idolators, whether the execratory against the "Minaeans" and the "kingdom of evil" in the daily prayer referred to Christians and the papacy, and particularly whether a certain tale about "a bastard," the son of a profligate, contained in a manuscript of very limited circulation alluded to Jesus. To extort an answer to these questions, the imprisoned Jews were placed under torture; and some of them, unable to endure their sufferings, confessed everything that the bloody tribunal demanded. The rabbi of Bologna, Ishmael Hanina, had the courage to declare while under torture that whatever admissions may be extorted from him were to be regarded in advance as null and void; but inasmuch as others had admitted that the Jews were guilty of uttering blasphemies against Christianity, the papal curia had sufficient ground for appropriating the property of the Jews. The prominent and well-to-do were forbidden to leave the city on pain of the severest punishment; however, by bribing the gatekeepers, the entire community succeeded in escaping to Ferrara. This aroused the wrath of Pius V against all Jews to such an extent that he proposed to the college of cardinals his intention of expelling the Jews from the papal states. Several prelates protested against this suggestion on the ground that the Holy See had ever protected the Jews, and was even in duty bound to do so that the remnant of the Jews be preserved and saved. The merchants of Ancona, likewise, importuned the pope not to ruin the commercial prosperity of his states with his own hand. But the pope's hatred of the Jews silenced the voice of reason, justice and personal advantage. A bull was issued (Feb. 26, 1569) ordering all the Jews of the papal states, with the exception of those of Rome and Ancona, to leave within three months; those who remained were to be reduced to slavery, or subjected to even harsher punishment. Despite the misery that awaited them, only a few embraced Christianity; the rest resolved to emigrate. The exiles lost nearly all their possessions, since they could not dispose of their real property or collect their debts within the brief period allotted them. Gedaliah ibn Yahya, the Chronicler, the author of Shalshelet ha-Kabala ("The Chain of Tradition") alone lost ten thousand ducats in outstanding debts. The exiles scattered and sought temporary refuge in the contiguous small states of Pesaro, Urbino, Ferrara, Mantua and Milan. The Jews of Avignon and Venaissin, the only communities that were permitted to exist on French soil since the expulsion of the Jews from France two centuries before, were also expelled. The reactionary prelates had long before cast their evil eyes upon these communities, for they had been particularly favored by the humanistic popes Leo X, Clement VII, and especially by Paul III. The only revenue the curia received from this enclave came from the commercial transactions of these Jews. The Jews of Avignon, Carpentras and other cities were very wealthy, and possessed all sorts of property, including land. But these, too, were banished.

The greatest majority of these exiles, like all those banished from the intolerant Christian states, sought refuge in Turkey, if they were fortunate enough to reach that haven without being captured and mistreated by the robber-knights of Malta. It looked then as though Christian Europe would no longer know a Jew. Hatred, persecution and expulsion everywhere. In the Catholic countries there raged the fanaticism of the papacy, and in the Protestant lands there reigned the narrow-mindedness of Lutheranism. Both seemed to strive to reduce to actuality the oft-expressed hope of the arch-enemies of the Jews that no vestige of the Jew be left in the Occident.

CHAPTER IV

THE JEWS IN TURKEY AND DON JOSEPH NASSI

(1566-1590)

Again, as happened frequently before, the threads of historic events were so entangled that even the systematic persecution of Jews in Christendom was unable to destroy them. The sun that set for them in the West in lowering clouds rose again for them gloriously in the East, even though only for a brief period. By a favorable turn of circumstances a period set in that, superficially, looked like a golden age. A Jew, who, in the lands of the cross, would have been burned at the stake without ceremony, rose to a position of influence in the land of the crescent, even achieved the rank of duke, and ruled over many Christians. With him and through him the Jews of Turkey, now counted by the millions, rose to a position of respect for which their outlawed brethren in Christian Europe, now in the minority, might well envy them. The Jew-baiting Christian rulers saw, with gnashing of teeth, this or that scheme of theirs thwarted by a Jewish hand, and their internal plots became all the more complicated. The trodden worm turned upon its tormentors. Joseph Nassi or John Miques, the outlawed Marano of Portugal, caused some Christian rulers and statesmen many an uncomfortable hour, and they had to fawn upon the man whom they would have killed like a mangy dog if they had him in their power. The illustrious Venetian Republic, the almighty Spain, the puffed-up France, and even the arrogant papacy stood in fear of him.

John Miques or Don Joseph Nassi who, upon his first appearance in Constantinople, was recommended to the Turkish court by letters of introduction from French statesmen, recommended himself still more by his engaging appearance, his resourceful mind, his experience with and knowledge of European Christian countries and their political situation. Sultan Suleiman, who was a judge of men, received him into favor at once. The sultan entertained far-reaching plans, and intended to declare war against Spain and to come to the assistance of the Mohammedans of the African coast. Through his wealth and the loyalty of his coreligionists in the Christian countries, Don Joseph Nassi learned of many things that occurred in Christian courts, and could report to the sultan the state of the political and military affairs without the necessity on the part of the latter of employing spies or of permitting himself to be deceived by the Christian ambassadors accredited to his court. Don Joseph was in a position to be of service to him by his shrewd advice and, within a short time, he became a person of eminence in Constantinople as the Frankish Bey. His influence was enhanced still further by one of those propitious accidents that used to be followed by the elevation or the humiliation of individuals. Suleiman's sons hated and were jealous of each other, and the Sultan himself preferred his younger son because of his warlike spirit. The courtiers, therefore, held aloof from the unfavored elder Prince Selim, and never spoke in his behalf to his father. Joseph Nassi, on the other hand, pleaded Selim's cause ardently with his father, and when the latter desired to attest to the favor in which he held his elder son, who was then in Asia Minor, by the bestowal of a rich gift, he selected his Jewish favorite as his envoy. The prince, overjoyed at the gift and the royal favor which it betokened, became from that moment the stanch friend of the envoy, made him his confidant, and appointed him a Gentleman of the Life-Guard (mutafarrica), an honor which the sons of Christians coveted greatly.

The envoys of the Christian courts watched with sullen anger the ever increasing influence the Jewish favorite, who was familiar with all their tricks, was gaining over the future Sultan, and circulated, therefore, all sorts of lies about him. The envoys of Venice and France, whose plots against the Turkish court he saw through and frustrated, and with whom he had private quarrels, were particularly hostile to Joseph. The Venetian authorities had imprisoned his mother-in-law, intended to rob her of her wealth, and had treated him with contempt; the French court was indebted to the firm of Mendes Nassi to the amount of one hundred and fifty thousand ducats, and made no effort to pay it, for Henry II and his successor excused themselves from paying this debt on a ground which is characteristic of the moral sense of that age: Law and religion forbade the king to repay his debt to a Jewish creditor because Jews had no legal right at all to transact business in France and their property could therefore be legally confiscated. Of course, the Sultan and his son did not recognize such morality, and urged almost threateningly that the claim be paid. The Sultan Suleiman was so kindly disposed towards Joseph that he presented him with a strip of territory on the Sea of Tiberias in Palestine which included the City of Tiberias, and gave him the express permission to people that city with Jews exclusively. When Selim II ascended the throne (1566), he named Joseph Duke of Naxos and of the Cyclades. Thus a Jew, too, could issue his commands in the pompous style: "We, Duke of the Aegean Sea, Lord of Naxos." But Joseph did not reside in the capital of his dukedom, where he would be out of touch with important current events, but in his palace in Belvedere near Constantinople. The administration of his islands he entrusted to a Christian nobleman named Coronel, a descendant of Abraham Senior, the Jewish finance minister of Spain who had reluctantly accepted Christianity at the time of the expulsion.

Much as the Christian princes looked askance upon the Jewish duke who was placed on a footing of equality with them, the state of European political affairs demanded that they even fawn upon him. If they wished to accomplish anything at the Turkish court they dared not offend him. When, after the new Turkish victory in Hungary, an Austrian embassy from Emperor Ferdinand I arrived in Constantinople to beg for a treaty of peace, and to win over the Turkish dignitaries by gifts and annuities, the matter was referred for settlement to Joseph of Naxos. His bitter enemies, Venice and France, were made to feel unpleasantly the power of the Jewish duke. The King of France still refused to pay the debt he owed the firm of Mendes; whereupon Joseph obtained from the Sultan a firman by virtue of which he could lay an embargo upon all ships under the French flag that put into a Turkish port, and he succeeded in seizing several vessels in the harbor of Alexandria, took possession of the goods they carried, and disposed of them to satisfy his claim (1569). The French court protested in vain; Selim approved of his favorite's conduct. As a result there ensued a coldness in the diplomatic relations of the two kingdoms which proved more disadvantageous to France than to Turkey. The French ambassador to the Porte exerted himself to the utmost to bring about Joseph's ruin, and employed for this purpose a Jewish physician by the name of Daud, one of the royal physicians who was also in the service of the duke. Daud promised the French ambassador to furnish proof positive that Joseph of Naxos was a traitor, that he betrayed in daily reports to the pope, the King of Spain, the Duke of Florence, the Genoese Republic, in a word to all the Sultan's enemies the doings of the Porte. Joseph, however, easily proved his innocence, and the machinations of the French ambassador failed utterly. The traitor Daud was exiled by Sultan Selim for life to the island of Rhodes, and he and two accomplices of his were excommunicated by all the rabbis and congregations of Constantinople either on their own volition or at Joseph's request.

With the Venetian Republic Joseph of Naxos dealt even more harshly. He frequently urged upon Selim, who likewise disliked the Venetians, to sever his peaceful relations with Venice and to undertake the conquest of the Venetian island of Cyprus. Joseph's connections with Europe facilitated this enterprise. Upon the news that the arsenal of Venice was blown up by an explosion of powder, the sultan, acting upon Joseph's advice, at once ordered his fleet to attack the island. One important city of Cyprus, Nicosia, was taken in the first assault, and another, Famagusta, was besieged (1570).

It transpired, as often before, that all the Jews were made responsible for the acts of one individual. That the Venetian Republic should imprison all the Levantine, mostly Jewish, merchants who happened to be in Venice at the outbreak of the war, and confiscate their merchandise was to be expected under the barbaric usages that then governed the relations of state to state; but that the Senate should resolve (Dec., 1571) to expel all the Jews of Venice as though they were accomplices of Joseph Nassi and the Turkish court was the result of the hatred fostered by the Church. Fortunately, this resolution was not carried out. While the fanatic Pope Pius V was endeavoring to organize a league of the Christian states, a sort of crusade against the infidel Turks, the city of Famagusta surrendered to the Turks, and the entire island thereby fell into Turkish hands. The Venetians had to sue for peace, and had to set their hope of attaining it upon another influential Jew who was to act as their mediator.

The influence of the Jews upon the Turkish court was so great that even Christians appealed to them for help. The Netherlands had risen in rebellion against Spain and its stern king, Phillip II, because he desired to introduce the inquisition in their midst against those who had become estranged from Catholicism. The bloodthirsty Alba sought to check this apostasy by means of human sacrifices. The gallows were to support the tottering cross. In this extremity the rebels of the Netherlands, the Beggars, turned to Joseph of Naxos who stood in communication with some nobles of Flanders whose acquaintance he had formed during his former stay in that country. Duke William of Orange, the moving spirit of the rebellion, sent a personal representative to Joseph of Naxos with the request that he urge upon the Sultan to declare war against Spain in which case Spain would be compelled to withdraw her troops from Flanders.

The Austrian emperor, Maximilian, likewise condescended to address an autograph letter to the Jewish duke in order to gain the favor of the Porte. Sigismund Augustus, King of Poland, who expected an important favor from the Porte, likewise turned to Joseph, addressed him as "His most serene Highness," and, what was of greater significance, promised to bestow favorable privileges upon the Jews of his domain in order to gain Joseph's assistance for his plans.

It may almost be said that the divan or the Turkish Council of State under Sultan Selim was composed of two parties—a secretly Christian party, represented by the grand vizier Mohammed Sokollis, and a Jewish party represented by Joseph of Naxos. Now one, now the other gained the upper hand. In addition to Joseph there were also other Jews in subordinate positions who exerted an influence, the men upon the officials, the women upon the sultanas. Sultan Selim's predilection for the Jews was so pronounced that a rumor spread that he was a born Jew who, as a child, was substituted for a prince in a harem. Even the grand vizier Mohammed Sokolli, much as he hated Joseph of Naxos and the Jewish influence, found it necessary to employ a Jewish agent and to entrust him with important diplomatic missions. The Venetian embassador whose real though secret mission was to counteract the influence of the Jews at the Turkish court, was himself instrumental in increasing that influence.

Solomon ben Nathan Ashkenazi was an unknown personality in Constantinople at the time when Joseph had achieved a position of influence in the divan. He had traveled extensively in his youth, had come to Poland, and achieved at last the position of chief physician of the King of Poland. When he removed to Constantinople he placed himself as a subject of the Venetian republic under the protection of the Venetian diplomatic agent. Though styled a rabbi, his real ability lay in the direction of diplomatic finesse, of unraveling tangled skeins, of mediation, compromise and adjustment. As such he was a great favorite with three successive Venetian agents in Constantinople. The grand vizier of Turkey, Mohammed Sokolli, recognized his diplomatic ability, attached him to himself, and entrusted him throughout his life with such commissions that demanded sagacity and skill. While the war against Turkey was still in progress, Solomon Ashkenazi was given the task of outlining the prospective treaty of peace.

The Christian cabinets did not at all suspect that the course of events which compelled them to take sides one way or another was directed by Jewish hands. This was especially the case in the election of a Polish king which occurred at this time. The death of the Polish King Sigismund Augustus (July, 1572), the last of the Jagellons, who left no heir, which necessitated a formal election at a venture, created a deep agitation in European political circles. The German emperor, Maximilian II, and the Russian czar, Ivan the Terrible, as Poland's neighbors, each desired the choice to fall upon a prince of his own house. The pope, fearing that the election of a Protestant king would strengthen the reform movement among the nobles and the cities of Poland, labored to place a Catholic prince upon the Polish throne. On the other hand, the Protestant countries, Germany and England, and above all, the various sects of Protestants within Poland herself, exerted themselves to elect a Protestant prince, or at least, a prince who had no decided Catholic inclinations. The personal ambition of a mighty French queen complicated the situation still further. The queen dowager Catherine de

Medici, shrewd as she was false, who believed in the prophecy of her astrologers that everyone of her sons would wear a crown, wished to have the foreign crown of Poland placed upon the head of her son, Henry, Duke of Anjou, in order that the fulfillment of the prophecy might not imply the death of her reigning son, Charles IX. For this reason, she and her son, the King of France, left no stone unturned to place the Duke of Anjou upon the Polish throne. But Turkey, too, had important interests and a weighty voice in the choice of the Polish king. Cabals and intrigues developed on all sides; each candidate sought to obtain a strong following among the higher and lower nobles of Poland as well as to gain the support of Turkey. Henry of Anjou seemed to have lost every prospect of election through the massacre of St. Bartholomew in France (Aug. 24, 1572). Such a monstrous crime, arranged and executed in cold blood, perpetrated by a king on his own subjects, was unheard of in Europe since the murder of the Albigenses in the thirteenth century at the papal behest. The adherents of the Reformation in all countries were dazed at this blow, and the candidates for the Polish throne made capital out of the St. Bartholomew massacre against the Duke of Anjou. For this reason, the French candidate, his mother and his brother had to redouble their efforts in order to gain the support of the Porte, and an envoy extraordinary had to be sent to Constantinople on this mission. But the choice of a Polish king was, in the last instance, decided by a Jew who had kept in the background, for the grand vizier who conducted the foreign policy of the sultan was guided entirely by Solomon Ashkenazi. The latter, who had many acquaintances among the Polish nobles, declared himself in favor of Henry of Anjou, and persuaded the grand vizier to approve of his choice. When Henry of Anjou was elected at last, almost unanimously (May, 1573), and the French envoy boasted that it was his efforts that accomplished this result, Solomon Ashkenazi wrote to the King of Poland, afterward King of France under the name of Henry III: "It was mostly through my exertions that your majesty was elected king; whatever was accomplished here (in the Porte) was the result of my efforts."

The appointment by the Porte of this Jewish physician and diplomatist to conclude a treaty of peace with the Venetian Republic excited a great deal of attention in Christian Europe. The illustrious Republic was rather reluctant to receive this Jewish envoy; but "Rabbi Solomon Ashkenazi," as he was styled, came, in spite of that, to Venice as the envoy extraordinary of Turkey, and the Venetian authorities, the doge and the senate, were compelled to shower honors and attentions upon him because Turkey was very sensitive to the treatment her representatives received abroad. Solomon was therefore received in solemn audience in the palace of the doge, and there he affixed his signature to the treaty of peace between Turkey and Venice in the name of the former. The signoria of Venice showed him other courtesies, too, and all European ambassadors stationed in Venice showered attentions upon him.

To his coreligionists of Venice Solomon proved a veritable savior. Their joy at the honors showered upon one of their brethren by the government was mingled with sorrow at their impending expulsion. The doge Mocenigo had insisted that the resolution formerly passed to expel the Jews from the Republic be executed. Some Jewish families had already emigrated. But while still in Constantinople, Solomon had urged upon the Venetian diplomatic agent, Jacopo Soranzo, to intercede in behalf of the Jews. Accordingly, upon his return to Venice Soranzo endeavored to convince the authorities of the disadvantages that would accrue to the Republic as a result of the expulsion of the Jews. The wisdom of incurring the enmity of the Jews was rather questionable, he argued, since they formed a power in Turkey, and the friendship of Turkey was the Republic's safest guarantee of peace, inasmuch as she could not rely either on Spain or upon the pope. As a result of Soranzo's intercession, the edict of expulsion was revoked (July 19, 1573), and the joy of his Venetian coreligionists was enhanced when Solomon obtained the promise that they would no more be threatened with banishment. Overwhelmed with honors, Solomon returned to Constantinople, where his influence kept on increasing. His son, who remained in Venice for his education, was treated by the doge with many marks of attention.

In consequence of the influence which Joseph of Naxos exerted over Sultan Selim and Solomon Ashkenazi over the prime minister, the Christian powers had to employ Jewish agents at the Turkish court. Even the fanatic Philip II of Spain, the very incarnation of hatred towards the Jews and heretics, had to employ Jewish diplomatic agents in order to obtain from Turkey a suspension of hostilities. The position of the Jews in Turkey, and particularly in the capital, under the eyes of their protectors, was therefore extraordinarily favorable. They acquired wealth, which then, too, spelled power. The wholesale trade and the taxes were largely in their hands; they also engaged in shipping on a large scale and competed with the Venetians. In Constantinople they owned the finest and largest houses with gardens and kiosks that equalled those of the grand vizier.

This prosperity, freedom and security reawakened the creative spirit among the Jews of Turkey. Moses Almosnino, rabbi and preacher of Salonica, wrote while in Constantinople (1567) "The Contrasts and Greatness of Constantinople," in which he presents a graphic picture of the life of the capital and describes the power and the development of the Turkish state with the eye of a keen observer. The physician, Samuel Shulam, a native of Spain, devoted himself to history, and published at the expense of Esther Kiera, a wealthy Jewish woman who stood high in the regard of the sultan, and who was a patroness of Jewish letters, an abridged edition of Zacuto's defective but useful chronicle (1566-67), supplemented by the hitherto disregarded Arabic dynastic chronicles of the Syrian chronicler, Abulfaraj Barhebraeus, to which Shulam added a history of Turkey. Shulam translated from the Latin Josephus' interesting apology, his reply to Apion, and thus made it accessible to Jewish readers for the first time. Of still greater importance were the two documents he added to Zacuto's chronicle: Sherira's historical epistle and Nathan Babli's important accounts of the gaonic period, without which an entire epoch of Jewish history would have resembled an empty page. The aged historian, Joseph Cohen, in his "Valley of Weeping" (Emek ha-Bacha, completed 1575), presents a long series of horrible pictures of persecution and calamities of all sorts, though he was able to conclude his history with a joyous description of the honors the Venetians showered upon Solomon Ashkenazi. The lame traveler, Isaac Akrish, who had wandered through many lands in his search after rare books, and who finally reached Constantinople, where he was supported by Esther Kiera and later by Joseph of Naxos, selected from his collection two manuscripts whose contents bore some resemblance to the living present, and published them under the title of "The Voice of a Glad Messenger" (Kol Mebasser). This book contained the history of the exilarch, Bostonai, supposedly a descendant of the House of David, who was a favorite of the first calif, Omar, and who married a Persian princess, and the letters exchanged between the Jewish statesman Hasdai ibn Shaprut of Spain, and Joseph, the Jewish king of the Chazars.

Even Hebrew poetry began to flourish in Turkey at this time under the patronage of Gedalaiah ibn Yahyah, a member of the Turkish branch of that famous family, who organized a poetic circle, a sort of poetic school. From time to time he invited those who showed an aptitude for neo-Hebraic poetic compositions to come together at his expense, to read their productions in public or to send their work on if they could not come in person, in order to arouse their zeal in behalf of Hebrew poetry, which had been neglected so long. The most distinguished of the numerous poets of Ibn Yahyah's circle were Judah Zarco, Saadia Longo, and the prolific Israel Najara, the last of the paytamin, who was then living at Damascus. As a matter of fact, the productions of all these poets were poetic in form rather than in content; in epigrams alone they, and especially Zarco, betrayed some originality; they are the autumnal flowers that betray the vestiges of a cold sun and a damp mist. But even these form a pleasant contrast to the cheerless wintry desolation that prevailed in other places and in later centuries. Some of the Spanish or Portuguese Maranos, who were fortunate enough to find refuge in Turkey, tried their hand at Latin verses, too. The Marano Flavio Jacobo de Evora wrote an elegy in fine Latin verses on the death of the famous physician Amatus Lusitanus who was compelled to leave Italy on account of the religious intolerance which prevailed there, and had come to Salonica where he met his death during an epidemic, a martyr to his professional duties.

While the Jews of Christendom had long since succumbed to the habit of servility and subjection, the Jews of Turkey, stimulated by the freedom and prosperity which they enjoyed, began to aspire to the hope of achieving complete independence. Joseph of Naxos had for some time cherished the thought of establishing a Jewish state, and the immense wealth of his mother-in-law, which was at his disposal, was to provide him with the means for its accomplishment. While still a Marano fugitive, he requested the Venetian Republic to cede to him one of the islands belonging to that state in order to people it with Jewish inhabitants. This request, however, was denied him either out of Christian narrow-mindedness or out of fear of commercial competition. Later on, when he gained the favor of Sultan Suleiman, he was given possession of the ruins of the city of Tiberias and seven adjoining villages with the intention of transforming that district into a small Jewish commonwealth. He sent one of his agents there to superintend the rebuilding of the city; and Selim, then crown prince, ordered the Pasha of Syria to assist in the work with all means at his disposal. The Arabian villagers of the neighborhood were required to render compulsory service. Within a year the rebuilding of the city of Tiberias was completed. Joseph of Naxos wished to make of it a manufacturing city to compete with the Venetians. He had mulberry trees planted there for the breeding of the silkworm and established silk spinneries; he had fine wool imported from Spain to that city in order to weave it into fine cloth.

It seems, however, that Joseph did not apply his usual energy to the promotion of the interests of this petty Jewish state, and New Tiberias proved a failure. His plans were generally too ambitious. When Sultan Selim made him a duke it never entered his mind to people his island dukedom with Jews. He had formed the ambition of becoming king of Cyprus, a dignity which the sultan had promised to confer upon him. Had his ambition been realized he would possibly have converted his kingdom into a Jewish state. But his enemy, the grand vizier Sokolli, thwarted his hopes. Thus his dreams of founding a Jewish state vanished. On the whole, Joseph of Naxos rendered no essential and lasting service to Judaism. He always attempted great things, but soon weakened or exhausted himself in the effort. The reason for his failure was due largely to the meagreness of his knowledge of Jewish and general literature. Joseph of Naxos was not a man of education, and can therefore not be placed in the category of Hasdai ibn Shaprut or Samuel Ha-Nagid, who dedicated their lives to the promotion and the glorification of Jewish knowledge.

This exceedingly favorable condition of the Jews of Turkey, that continued for a period of eighty years, left, after all, no deep impress upon Jewish life. It produced not a single genius capable of evolving ideas big with consequences for the future and of indicating a new tendency. Not one of the communal leaders of that period rose above mediocrity. The rabbis and preachers were men of erudition, but they followed in the beaten path without contributing anything of unusual importance even to their own particular branch of Jewish scholarship. Only one rabbi produced a significant work which is regarded as authoritative to this day though its validity has often been questioned; but even he created nothing new or original. Joseph Caro, chief rabbi of the Palestinian city of Safed, impelled by religious fervor, cabalistic vagaries and personal ambition, had completed his religious code Shulhan-Aruch (1567). He had devoted an entire lifetime to the preparation of this work in which he gathered together the vast rabbinic material, collated the pros and cons, and stated the final decision of each disputed point in its appropriate place. Caro's aim was to put a stop to the confusion resulting from the diversity of opinion found in the Talmud, its commentaries and abridgments so that no two rabbis agreed on a single point, each one being in a position to adduce either the yea or the nay on one and the same question. As he was a Spaniard by birth, he unconsciously gave the preference to the views of Spanish over German and French authorities, and was thus guilty of one-sidedness. He also included cabalistic elements which he borrowed from Spanish mystics. But Caro, like Maimonides, failed in his efforts to put an end to this confusion of opinion; it was inherent in the very sources whence the laws were deduced. As though in derision of the conformity and unanimity which Caro aimed at, a keen young rabbi of Cracow annotated Caro's work immediately upon its appearance, and reversed many of his decisions. Caro's dream of gaining universal recognition as the head of Jewry by means of his rabbinic works thus came to naught. The young rabbi, Moses Isserles, who, rather inelegantly styled his comments on "The Ready Table" "Table Cloth" (Mappa), merely gave expression to the fact of the irreconcilability of the mutually opposing elements of the religious law. Isserles confronted the Spanish authorities upon whom Caro relied with the opinions of the German and Polish rabbis to which he gave preference. To the rigorous opinions to which the over-scrupulous Asherides had given the validity of law, Isserles added new ones which the subtleties of the German-Polish Talmudic schools had developed. Both in Caro's "Ready Table" and in Isserles's "Table Cloth" an entirely new Judaism made its appearance—a Judaism differing from that taught by the Pentateuch, and proclaimed by the prophets, and even from that interpreted by Maimonides.

The spirit that animated Caro's rabbinic Judaism is indicated in his attitude towards a contemporary who was unique in his time in his thirst for knowledge and truth and who might have been able to subject Judaism to a process of purification in the Sixteenth as Mendelssohn did in the Eighteenth Century had not the tendencies of his age proved unfavorable. This preeminent personality was Azariah ben Moses dei Rossi (born in Mantua, 1514, d. 1578), a member of an old Italian family. His constant absorption in books so undermined his health that he became weak, sallow, emaciated, feverish and walked about like a shadow. But this living skeleton possessed a vigorous, healthy mind. He had mastered the entire field of Jewish literature, and had also familiarized himself with the Latin historic literature as well as with medicine. At the same time he was compelled to wander from place to place, settled first in Ferrara, then in Bologna which he had to leave in consequence of the tortures and expulsions instigated by Pius V, and finally settled in Ferrara for the second time. He stood in close contact with the best men of his time, Jews, Maranos and Christians, and all admired him as a marvel of erudition. But more admirable even than his astounding knowledge was the use to which he applied his vast erudition. He was the first to bring into contact and into relation the two remote fields of literature—the Talmud with its cognate branches, and the elements of the Judaeao-Greek world found in Philo, Josephus and also in the patristic literature, so that, through the testimony of such different witnesses, he might examine into the truth of historic accounts. He did not take given reports for granted, but subjected everything to a thorough, critical examination.

An accident brought to light dei Rossi's hidden intellectual treasures. Ferrara was visited by a fearful earthquake (Nov. 18, 1570) which compelled its inhabitants to seek refuge outside of the city. In a village, dei Rossi came upon a scholarly Christian who tried to divert his mind from the depressing effects of the earthquake by reading a Greek book, "The Letter of Aristeas," dealing with the septuagint. In discussing this subject, it was brought home to dei Rossi that even educated Jews, owing to their one-sided occupation with the Talmud or with effete philosophies, were entire strangers to their own splendid literature of the period of the second Temple, while Christian scholars found exhilaration therein in their depression. Encouraged by his Christian friend, he therefore determined to translate the "Letter of Aristeas," the alleged discourses of a Greek king on Jewish wisldom, into Hebrew to make it accessible to his coreligionists.

In his chief work Meor Enayim (The Light of the Eye, written in 1573) dei Rossi treats of parallel Talmudic and profane assertions on historic and archaeological points, submits the various sources to a critical comparison, and comes to the surprising conclusion, which he states frankly, that many Talmudic expressions which his Jewish contemporaries regarded as incontrovertible truth do not stand the test of conscientious examination. When dei Rossi's work, upon its first appearance, reached Safed the over-scrupulous of that city naturally regarded it as extremely heretical. Thereupon Joseph Caro ordered Elisha Galaico, a member of his rabbinical court, to issue a writ of excommunication against the book, addressed to all Jewry, and to demand that it be burned; but Joseph Caro died before he affixed his signature to this writ (April, 1575). The rabbis of France published this writ after Caro's death, but the Italian Jews who knew dei Rossi as an orthodox and as a man of moral purity were not so fanatic as to condemn him. The Mantua rabbinate applied to it only the procedure of Ibn Adret against the reading of profane literature, and prohibited the reading of dei Rossi's work on the part of youths under twenty-five years of age. In consequence of this, through unofficial excommunications, dei Rossi's work exerted but little influence upon his Jewish contemporaries and their immediate posterity. In Christian circles, on the other hand, more attention was paid to dei Rossi's work, and it was even translated into Latin.

As a matter of fact, dei Rossi's sober, critical viewpoint could not possibly meet with encouragement in a period when the Cabala had dethroned reason, and when blind faith was regarded as the highest virtue. The raptures of Solomon Molcho and Joseph Caro and their Messianic vagaries may be regarded as sound sense in comparison with the practices that came into vogue subsequently. In the last three decades of the Sixteenth Century the cabala reigned supreme in Palestine, and devised apparitions and exorcisms, and, spreading throughout Turkey, Poland, Germany and Italy, beclouded the minds, even depraved the hearts, and stifled every logical thought or branded it as heretical. Again, as in the time of the birth of Christianity, Galilee, and particularly the district of Safed, became the theatre for evil spirits and those possessed of them that invited mystic exorcism and revealed profound secrets, so that it is hard to tell whether the exorcisms produced the possessed or the reverse. A period of cabalistic frenzy set in which was accompanied by immorality and corruption and which disparaged not alone the sciences but even the Talmud with its logical train of thought. When Europe beheld the dawn of a new day, the darkness of medievalism settled upon Jewry. This tendency was the creation of two men who infected an ever growing circle with their vagaries and ecstasies: Isaac Luria and his disciple Hayim Vital Calabrese.

Isaac Luria (born in Jerusalem 1534, d. 1572) descended from a German family. Bereft of his father in early youth, he was taken to Egypt to the house of his wealthy uncle, Mordecai Francis, a tax-farmer. Dedicated to the study of the Talmud, he was also initiated into the cabala which dominated him henceforth to such an extent that his mind was clouded by it. The dry study of the Talmud that filled the head with subtle hair-splitting and fruitless formulas but left the heart empty seems to have become repugnant to him and to have driven him to a fantastic mysticism. He preferred the dread solitude of the Nile region to the noisy school-house, and the absorption in mystic worlds and whimsical prayers to intellectual operations. He was powerfully attracted by the Zohar which then made its first appearance from the press and thus became accessible to everybody. The more familiar he became with the cabala through his absorption in the sounding nothingness of the Zohar, the more he withdrew from society, neglected even his young wife, visited his house only from Sabbath to Sabbath, spoke little and that only in Hebrew. Luria is said to have spent about twenty years in such retirement with the result, as is usually the case with persons whose intellect is not stronger than their imagination, that he became an ecstatic dreamer. Firmly convinced that the Zohar was the authentic work of Simon ben Yohai and that the absurdities revealed therein were of divine origin, Luria endeavored to discover therein higher wisdom and profounder truths. His heated imagination led him to believe that he actually saw the prophet Elijah, the teacher of mysteries, face to face.

What did the prophet Elijah, or the Zohar, or rather his own imagination reveal to him? First of all he sought to introduce system, unity and consistency in the chaos of the Zohar, as though one could expect to find logic in the babble of a semi-idiot. The hermit of Cairo endeavored to solve the problem of how God had created and ordered the world by means of the Sephiroth, or how the deity revealed itself in the shape of essences, or how it shrank within itself, so that, out of its infinity, a finite being might be developed. Thus there resulted in his system a tangled network of forces and counterforces, effects and countereffects, forms and degrees in the four spheres of Separation, Creation, Formation and Transformation; and to this inane concept he gave such strange names that he could justly complain afterwards that no one was able to comprehend his mystic system. But this very complicated theory of the creation of the visible universe served Luria merely as an introduction to the practical cabala which he regarded as of greater importance, and by means of which an influence can be exerted upon the spiritual world. Luria's practical cabala rests upon a peculiar psychology derived from the Zohar in its turn.

The souls reflect the close connection between the infinite and the finite. In Adam there was included every soul destined to enter a human body, but each soul in accordance with its higher or lower grade found its place in the corresponding higher or lower organs and members of the first man. Accordingly there are brain souls, eye souls, hand souls and foot souls, each of which is to be regarded as an emanation or a spark (Nizuz) of Adam. In consequence of Adam's first sin (the cabala, too, utilizes the fall of man for its superstition), the high and the low, the upper and the lower, the good and the evil souls became confused and mixed. Even the purest souls thereby received an admixture of the evil or of the demoniac "husk" (Kelipha). But the kingdom of heaven or the purification of the First Man can never be realized unless the consequences of the first sin, the confusion of good and evil, be destroyed and removed. The inferior souls entered into the pagans, the higher into the people of Israel; but the former contain some mixture of the original good, just as the latter contain some mixture of evil. This element of evil it is that ever impels man to sin and prevents the chosen few of the human race from obeying the divine commandments, the Torah. The Messianic Era would remove this subversion of order or the disorder consequent upon Adam's fall, and would raise the transitory world to the height of the spiritual. This era, however, must be preceded by an absolute separation of the good from the evil; and this, again, can be accomplished only through Israel, when every Israelite would remove the admixture of evil from his soul. To this end, the souls (of the Israelites above all) must transmigrate into the bodies of human beings and animals, even into streams, wood and stone. The doctrine of metempsychosis forms the very pith of Luria's cabala, but he gave to it a peculiar turn of his own. According to his theory even the souls of the righteous must be subjected to transmigration since these, too, are not free from the demoniac admixture; there is no righteous man upon earth who doeth only good and sinneth not, that is whose soul is free from the admixture of impurity. In this way Luria believed to have overcome the difficulty which proved a stumbling block to the older cabalists.

But inasmuch as man is constantly exposed to the temptation of sin, this separation of the good from the evil elements of the soul, or this expiation for and the destruction of the original sin, or the restoration of order in Adam would require a very long time. Luria discovered a means for hastening this process. Alongside of the migration of the sinful soul there is also an *impregnation of the soul* (Ibbur). If a purified soul has neglected some religious duty in this world, or has had no opportunity of fulfilling it, it must return to the earthly life, attach itself to the soul of a living human being, and unite and coalesce with it in order to retrieve this neglect. Also the departed spirits of even just, purified souls make their reappearance upon earth for the purpose of strengthening and supporting the weak, vacillating souls that could not reach perfection by their own efforts. These pure spirits coalesce and become one with the struggling souls, provided they have some mutual affinity, that is, are derived from the same Adamitic sparks or organs, since, on the whole, only similar (homogenous) souls attract one another while dissimilar (heterogeneous) repel one another. According to this theory, the exile and the dispersion of Israel had for their purpose the redemption of mankind. The purified souls of Jewish saints are to form a union with the human souls of other nations in order to free them from their inherent demoniac dross.

Isaac Luria devised an entire system of transmigration and impregnation of souls. He regarded it of great importance to recognize the sex of the souls, for there were female souls in male bodies and vice versa. For purposes of matrimony it was of especial importance whether the souls of the couple corresponded in descent and degree one with the other or not; in the former case the union would prove harmonious and yield worthy offspring; in the latter case it would create dissension, and produce a degenerate race. Luria believed also that he possessed the power of adjuring good spirits, of compelling them, as it were, to enter the bodies of living persons, and of thus forcing them to reveal the secrets of the other world. In this way he believed he possessed the key to the Messianic Era, and to the reestablishment of the order of the universe. For himself, he claimed to possess the soul of the Messiah of the tribe of Joseph (ben Joseph), and to have a Messianic mission. He saw spirits everywhere, and heard their whisperings in the murmur of rushing water, in the stirring of trees and grass, in the song of birds and in the sparkles of fire. He saw souls disengaging themselves from the body upon death, soaring to the heights or ascending from the graves. Above all, he held intercourse with the spirits of the saints mentioned in the Bible, the Talmud, and in the rabbinic literature, and especially with Simon ben Yohai, the alleged author of the Zohar. In a word, Luria was decidedly a seer of ghosts and a necromancer, a combination of Abraham Abulafia and Solomon Molcho, who expected to bring about the Messianic redemption by means of cabalistic jugglery; but he was also matter-of-fact and sophistic at the same time. He introduced the Talmudic subtility into the cabala.

To be in a better position, possibly, to carry out his work of redemption Luria, with his wife and child, removed to Safed, which was a hot-bed of mysticism, and where the Zohar was regarded with as much reverence as the Law of Moses. Safed was inhabited by Jews exclusively, and nearly all the rabbis and all the communal leaders were cabalists. Here, the cabalists could indulge in their practices to their hearts' content. Protected by the favor which the Jewish duke of Naxos enjoyed at the court of Sultain Selim, they felt as secure as in an independent state, ruled by themselves. At first, Luria's appearance in Safed, it seems, attracted but little attention; it was only after making the acquaintance of a still greater though possibly not so honest an enthusiast that Luria became famous as a cabalist. This associate of his was Hayim Vital Calabrese (1543-1620), whose father had emigrated from Italy to Palestine. Vital's knowledge of the Talmud and the cabala was only superficial, but he possessed an extravagant imagination, had a decided inclination for the adventurous and knew how to attract attention. For two and a half years he had occupied himself with alchemy, when he turned to Luria's mystic teachings. Certain it is that each unconsciously deceived the other. Together they frequented deserts and graves which were favorite places with Luria, because he believed that in such solitary spots he would be able to attract to himself the spirit of Simon ben Yohai, the reputed arch-mystic. Now and then Luria would send his disciple forth to exorcise evil spirits, and delivered to him for this purpose certain formulas composed of transposed letters of the Tetragrammaton. As a matter of course, evil spirits fled in terror before Vital's gaze, good spirits attached themselves to him and imparted secrets to him.

It was this Vital who bruited abroad the alleged extraordinary divine gifts of his master, seemingly with the view of making capital for himself out of his master's fame. The hitherto isolated Luria found himself all at once surrounded by a crowd of votaries. A number of disciples gathered about him, and he imparted to them his hallucinations, and informed each one of what portion of Adam's body his soul was derived, what transmigrations it had experienced prior to its present bodily existence, and what its mission is upon earth. He divided his disciples into two classes: Initiates and Novices. Cabalistic discourses and notations, ghost-seeing and exorcism formed the activities of Luria and his disciples.

Luria was on the point of forming a new sect in Judaism. On Sabbath days he assumed a white garb, symbolic of pure souls, and wore a fourfold garment representative of the Tetragrammaton. The background of all his revelations and activities was that he was the Messiah of the tribe of Joseph, the precursor of the Davidic Messiah, though he did not state so explicitly to his disciples, but merely alluded to it. His delusion was that the Messianic Era had commenced with the beginning of the second half of the second millennium since the destruction of the Temple (1568).

The premature death of the mystic, in the thirty-eighth year of his life, only tended to his transfiguration, and, with Oriental exaggeration, his disciples styled him henceforth "the holy and divine." They asserted that, had Luria lived five years longer, he would have so thoroughly reformed the world that it would have been worthy of the Messianic redemption. Abraham Abulafia, who invented cabalistic delusions of his own, was pronounced a heretic and was persecuted; Isaac Luria, who based similar delusions upon the Zohar, was almost deified.

Upon the death of Isaac Luria, Vital Calabrese came to the fore. He at once assumed a certain superiority over his fellow-disciples, claimed that in his last hours Luria had appointed him his successor and withdrew from them, in accordance with the alleged last request of his master, the written notations which Luria had given them. He even gave them to understand that he was the Messiah, of the tribe of Joseph. Some of Luria's disciples, however, paid no heed to Vital, and spread Luria's teachings on their own account in various countries, as, for instance, Israel Saruk did in Italy and in Amsterdam.

The Lurian cabala wrought great mischief to Judaism and encrusted it with a mustiness of which it could not entirely rid itself to this day. From Luria's activity there resulted a Zoharistic-cabalistic Judaism, alongside of the Talmudic-rabbinic Judaism. As a result of Luria's teachings the Zohar assumed equal, and sometimes superior, rank with the Bible and the Talmud. The Lurian cabala attached to every minor and trifling custom a profound, mystic significance, and, in consequence, placed the stamp of ritualism upon Judaism more emphatically than the rabbinic scrupulosity had done hitherto. Luria's usages (Minhagim) move one to laughter, but also fill one with sorrow at the sight of the debasement of the sublime.

It is true that the Lurian mysticism attached importance to one thing which had strangely been neglected in Jewish circles: devotion during prayer; but even this devotion degenerated into cabalistic trifling. Every word and every syllable is to be uttered with devotion, so that while uttering it one might think of the world of Sephiroth, of the mystic meaning of God's name, and other things of a similar nature. True it is, that the Lurian cabala enjoins a cheerful frame of mind, and warns against gloom, dejection and anger; but this cheerfulness, as a result of its admixture of mysticism, becomes dismal and uncanny, like the laughter of a lunatic. The Lurian cabala revolves around the

Sabbath, the prayers and the meals of that day. Everything done on that day reacts upon the higher spheres. The followers of Luria greeted the Sabbath "the mystic bride," with a singsong; Luria had written Chaldaic hymns for this purpose which teem with obscure, senseless formulas. The Lurian cabala even introduced a second Day of Atonement. The seventh day of the Feast of Booths, the day when the Hosanna is recited, was formerly regarded as a day of rejoicing. Joseph Caro, in his code, did not yet dare attach a higher mystic and religious solemnity to that day; but Luria declared it a minor Day of Atonement, prescribed that in the preceding night a mystic watch be kept, and saw some higher mystic meaning in every leaflet of the willow twig and in the seven-fold procession about the scroll of the Law. The Lurian mysticism had a deteriorating effect upon morals, too. It taught that marriage was conditioned upon an affinity of souls; where discord exists the marriage is not a pre-ordained union. The cabalists (and who was not such, then?) therefore took advantage of the least domestic disagreement to divorce their wives in order to seek for their harmonious, preordained half. Divorces were therefore of frequent occurrence in cabalistic circles. Cabalists not rarely left their wives and children in the Occident, migrated to the Orient and contracted one or more marriages without the children of the various marriages knowing aught one about the other.

And so, the lustre shed upon their Oriental coreligionists by the Duke of Naxos and other politically influential Jews resembled, after all, a mere will-o'-the-wisp that casts a phosphorescent glow upon a swamp. For this was, indeed, a period of religious stagnation. It was a decided relapse into paganism; and, what was still worse, there was not a single individual clear-sighted enough to recognize the evil, or brave enough to brand it as such no matter in how feeble a voice. It is possible that the powerful protection which the Turkish Jews enjoyed and which lulled them into a sense of security was itself conducive to this state of stagnation. At any rate , no change for the better took place when that protection was gradually withdrawn. For Joseph of Naxos' political influence ceased with the death of Sultan Selim (1574). Sultan Murad III (1574-95), Selim's son, did, indeed, in accordance with his father's request, permit Joseph to retain his dignity and his offices; but the latter exerted no longer any direct influence upon the divan, was supplanted by his antagonist, the grand vizier Mohammed Sokolli, and by his rival Solomon Ashkenazi, and retained a shred of power only by means of harem intrigues. Joseph did not long survive his partial disgrace (died Aug. 1579). His vast treasures melted away like his ambitious schemes. The greedy Sultan Murad, who literally slept upon sacks of gold for fear of robbers, acting upon Sokolli's advice, confiscated Joseph's entire property on the pretext that he was responsible for Joseph's debts, and it was only with difficulty that the widowed duchess, Reyna Nassi, received out of the estate her dowry of ninety thousand ducats. This noble woman, though the spirit of neither her mother, Doña Gracia, nor of her husband descended upon her, desired to dedicate her fortunes to the promotion of Jewish knowledge, and established a Hebrew press in her palace. But she was misled by her undiscerning business manager, Joseph Askaloni, to whom she had entrusted her press, with the result that her printing establishment issued only insignificant works (1579-98) that had better been left in obscurity.

With the waning of the Duke of Naxos' star, the star of the Jewish statesman Solomon Ashkenazi, the mediator between Turkey and Venice, rose into the ascendancy. But great as was his influence by virtue of his diplomatic finesse, he did not, like Joseph of Naxos, stand in the forefront of events as a Turkish dignitary, but remained in the background as a shrewd, silent political agent. He conducted the negotiations for peace between Turkey and Spain with rare skill, and also partly accomplished his purpose. He took great pains to maintain peaceful relations between Turkey and Venice, and, in recognition of his services, the doge maintained Solomon's sons who were acquiring their education in Venice at the expense of the state.

Jewish women who possessed shrewdness and a little knowledge of medicine also acquired great power by means of the harem, during the reign of the sultan Murad III, Mohammed IV and Ahmed I. The most distinguished of these women was Esther Kiera, the widow of a certain Elijah Chendali. She stood in especial favor with the Sultana Baffa, the favorite wife of Murad, who was the real power behind the throne during the reign of her husband and later on, of her son. The envoys of Christian states could accomplish nothing at the Porte without gaining Esther Kiera's good will. The Venetians, in particular, turned this circumstance to their best advantage. Any one who aspired to a high office, therefore, treated Kiera with great reverence and showered flattery upon her. She naturally acquired wealth as a result of her political influence as did everyone else in Turkey who enjoyed the possession of state secrets. She took a great interest in the affairs of her coreligionists, supported the poor and suffering, fed the hungry and comforted the sorrowing. She was also a patron of Jewish knowledge; Abraham Zacuto's history was published at her expense. As a matter of course, her eminent position excited envy; and she, together with her sons, was finally murdered by the Spahis, in whose appointment and dismissal she had interfered.

Under Sultan Ahmed I, the widow of the statesman Solomon Ashkenazi rose into eminence and power. She had succeeded in curing the young sultan of the small-pox which endangered his life shortly after his accession and for which the Turkish physicians could find no cure. Out of gratitude to her, the sultan gave her son Nathan, who was about to set out for Venice, warm letters of introduction to the Doge Grimani, and accordingly, Nathan Ashkenazi was received in Venice with high honors, like his father. But the bestowal of such honors upon Jews grew rarer and rarer in Turkey, too, and finally ceased entirely the more enervated the empire became and the more the sultans degenerated into voluptuaries. The glory of the Turkish Jew vanished like a meteor. Extortions, plunder and open outrages upon the Jews on the part of the pashas became more and more common in Turkey, too, since the Jews had no longer powerful friends in the sultan's court. The religious, Talmudic and intellectual centre of Judaism was transferred to another land—Poland.